

THE  
UNFASHIONABLE  
W I F E.  
A N O V E L.

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V O L. II.

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Press, in Fleet Street.

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THE  
UNFASHIONABLE WIFE:  
A  
MORAL HISTORY.

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LETTER XXXIII.

*Mrs. ASTELL to Miss HALES.*

I Am so exceedingly ashamed of myself, my Dear, I am become so weak, so unguarded, that I am not fit to be left to myself; and yet the mere hearing I was to have company put me into such a flutter—I really blush, though alone, at the remembrance of my folly, which,

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whatever pain I endure upon the occasion, I will discover to you, in order to punish myself, in some measure, for it.

Would you believe it, *Marianne*? Would you imagine that it was possible for me to be sorry to have Mrs. *Oswald* invited to keep me company? And yet the bare mention of such an invitation threw me into a disorder which almost deprived me of my senses, though nobody can have an higher esteem for Mrs. *Oswald*, nor receive more pleasure from her society. The truth is, my Dear, — I am almost ashamed to own it, — I thought *Byron*, by being so eager to get her here, was quite fond of her. And ought I to be shocked at his fondness for her? Are they not very suitable to each other? Are they  
not

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not, both young, amiable, and free to chuse each other? But still, *Marianne*, I am hurt by these reflections. My God, how weak I am! how ridiculous I have made myself! I hope *Mr. Byron* did not guess the cause of my behaviour to him. He appeared to be very much affected at my indisposition at first, but he, afterwards, I believe, thought me extremely foolish. How have I exposed myself! What must he think of me? I dread the sight of him; I detest myself. — Can I then wonder if every body else should despise me? *Mr. Byron*, undoubtedly, thought to do me a particular pleasure, by inviting so agreeable a woman to be with me; little did he imagine, that he alone was all, and every thing to me, and that, conversing with him, I wanted no other company. I almost

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forget, indeed, that there are any other people in the world. Thank God, however, he does not know my weakness: If I could suppose him acquainted with it, I should die with shame. He seemed to be quite astonished, as well as concerned, at my sudden indisposition, and took a great deal of pains, not only to forward my recovery, but to restore that tranquillity to my mind, of which he had, ignorantly, robbed me. But I am really frightened when I think of the risque I ran of having the state of my heart discovered.

I sincerely wish, that Mr. *Astell* would take me away from this place. I am sure I am very improperly situated here. I cannot, indeed, imagine, why he came to *Byron-Lodge*: He could not come for Mr. *Byron's* company,



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company, as he seldom is with him; and as to Miss *Burrell*, he could see *her*, he could converse with *her*, quite as well at home. I submit to my fate, be it what it will; yet I cannot help wishing, that Mr. *Astell* had not exposed me to a situation by no means suitable, supposing it *not* to be dangerous, which it certainly is.

I am, my dear Friend,

Yours as usual,

M. A.

## LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.

SURELY *Astell* must be a downright Idiot, or else he has designs which are so entirely beneath a Man, who has the least regard for his Honour, that I cannot bring myself to believe him capable of them. To leave so lovely a Woman, so injured by his neglect, for ever alone with a Man, who is but too sensible of her charms, is to behave in the most indiscreet manner imaginable. This behaviour of his not only warrants the charge of indiscretion against him; it may also produce some very disagreeable consequences to *her*; for I cannot suppose that she is totally void of sentiments of the softest kind.

Her

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Her every feature is strongly expressive of tenderness, and the affecting sensibility which she discovers when any melancholy tale is communicated to her, or when she beholds any object in misery, sufficiently prove her to be of a very gentle disposition. By the melting languor which sometimes appears in her charming eyes, I should also imagine that she has a heart susceptible of Love.

And now, having fully, I hope, convinced you, that the Lady has a propensity to encourage sensations natural enough to the sex, at her time of life, you must give me leave to speak a little of myself. I am also at a time of life when the blood boils with impetuosity. I am extremely amorous, and at the same time have so much tenderness clinging about me, that I cannot sit and

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behold so inviting a Woman continually before me unmoved; a Woman, whom I am obliged to treat not only with the greatest good manners, but with the greatest hospitality — supposing I had ever so strong an aversion to her — to return the civilities which I received from her when I was her guest. — Urged by these considerations, I necessarily devote a considerable part of my time to her, and study to entertain her : My assiduities, I plainly perceive, give her pleasure; and by appearing pleased with them she increases my satisfaction. — She increases, indeed, my Love at the same time, and inspires me with a thousand wishes to render myself still more agreeable to her. Whenever we desire eagerly to obtain a favourite point, on which we set our hearts, our solitudes frequently make us successful. — Without deserv-  
ing to be



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be ranked among the vainest fellows living, I flatter myself that I have so far succeeded, as to find Mrs. *Astell* prefer my conversation to that of every other man; though Discretion, and perhaps Delicacy, makes her endeavour to disguise her prepossessions in my favour. --- When I see this charming preference, can you suppose that it does not animate me to a degree beyond expression? --- Yes --- *I am* beyond expression animated; and must, unavoidably, strive to render myself still more attractive in her eyes, and to increase the good opinion she at present entertains of me. I have hitherto conducted myself with all desirable respect, though I confess I am sometimes tempted --- in consequence of our frequent private interviews, and of the consideration with which she treats me, — *not* to fail in the respect I most cer-

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tainly owe her, *but* to take those allowable, because decent Freedoms, which every man longs to be permitted to enjoy with the Woman whom he loves; Freedoms I have not yet seized, having been awed by the deference which is, I think, due to Mrs. *Astell* as a married woman, as the Wife of my Friend: I cannot, however, I will not pretend to say, how long I shall be able to forbear, when she looks temptingly beautiful, and when nothing but the amiable glow of conscious Virtue; --- nothing but the delicate propriety of her carriage, arising at once from Modesty and Reflection, keeps me at a distance.--- If she ever *did* feel any reluctance at my sending for Mrs. *Oswald*, she has conquered it; for she looked pleased upon my reading her answer to me, in which she informs me, that she should gladly meet Mrs. *Astell*

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*Astell* at the Lodge, if she had not a young Lady under her care; adding, How far it is proper for me to bring her with me, I cannot determine.

You shall determine for her, Madam, said I to Mrs. *Astell*. Do you imagine that Mrs. *Oswald* will be guilty of any impropriety, by introducing her young Friend to our acquaintance here?

She smiled, and replied, I should imagine not.

I then dispatched a special messenger immediately, to hasten their arrival.

Meeting with *Astell* afterwards, I told him what I had been doing. --- He looked confoundedly out of humour. --- What, in the name of wonder, said he, can have induced you to wish for *that* woman with you? She

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has always a sarcastical jest to let out upon every thing that is said or done : Of all women, I abominate those most who pretend to be Wits, and who bolt out their cursed lively remarks, and severe repartees, upon every little occurrence, though ever so trifling.

I do not recollect, answered I, that I ever heard Mrs. *Oswald* make any severe reflections, nor did I ever see her take notice of any thing improperly. I always thought her a woman of excellent Sense, and great Delicacy.

Oh ! replied he, sullenly, --- may be so --- may be so --- I did not know that you was in love with her.

Not I; upon honour, said I. --- May one not do justice to a woman, without being suspected of a passion for her ?

Oh !



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Oh ! then you are only doing justice to a Woman's Understanding and Delicacy when you are civil to her. --- You are never in love with any of them.

I do not say *that* neither, replied I, smiling.

Well, well, *Byron*, cried he, I would really give a considerable sum, to know who you are in love with.

And really, *Astell*, said I, laughing out, I would give no small sum to keep you in ignorance about her.

Whe---w ! --- I'll be d---'d, then, if I have not hit upon it. --- You are in love with my Wife, by G--d ! ---

I declare, *George*, I stood in need of all the assurance I could, possibly, muster up, in order to answer so home a charge.

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a charge. I felt an unusual glow in my face, and was going to make a very simple reply; but he prevented the utterance of it.

Turning short upon his heel, he cried,—No, no, *Byron*, I wronged you there,—you have a better taste; you can never be struck with such a dull, insipid toad as *Maria*.—*You* love a girl of spirit, if I know any thing of your humour.

If you have so indifferent an opinion of *Mrs. Astell*, said I, recovering myself, how came you to marry her; for I suppose you married her from choice?

Why, at that time, I was confoundedly in love with her person, and did not once bestow a single thought on any thing else about her; but, to be sure, she is a poor, whining, puling creature;

creature ; she has not a spark of vivacity in her composition.

I should have imagined, *Astell*, said I, that a woman with so much gentleness, would have been infinitely more suitable to you, who are not made to bear contradiction patiently, than a spirited one ; such a woman, however charming she may be in some moments, may be very troublesome in others.

Every man to his taste, *Byron*, replied he, with an odd kind of self-satisfied air — Success attend *you* with *yours*.

He then left me, laughing, and joined *Kitty Burrell*, who waited for him, and they went into the garden.

I returned to Mrs. *Astell*, and found her lost in thought, with her head leaning

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leaning upon her hand: She raised her head on my entrance, and I saw that she had been weeping. — My compassion for her was of a softer kind than I had ever felt. — Sitting down by her, I took her hand in mine, and begged her to tell me what had happened to disturb her; assuring her, that I would do every thing in my power to remove it.

She said, that she was extremely obliged to me, but that her disquiet was not of a nature to be easily removed.

I felt my indignation rise at *Astell's* cruel conduct, and could not help muttering out some harsh expressions against him. She reproved me for them; and begged me to spare him in the tenderest, and the most pitying terms, imputing his behaviour, with a candour very



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very uncommon, to impulses which he was not able to resist.

By taking his part in so unnecessary a manner, she, I confess, excited envy in my mind; and I should have been angry with her, had not the sweetest smiles immediately succeeded her dejection. Those smiles disarmed me, and rendered me incapable of saying, or doing any thing to vex her; and, indeed, after a moment's recollection, I thought only of turning her Apology for her Husband's behaviour to my own advantage.

You really believe, then, said I, that people cannot always check the violence of their passions, and are, therefore, excusable even when hurried to say or do things very indiscreet, if not absolutely criminal? When a man, for instance, is exceedingly enamoured with

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with an amiable woman, who is already under engagements, and finds, upon a nearer acquaintance with her, that his passion is too strong to be either restrained, or concealed, you will allow him to confess this passion, and to obtain her leave to give a vent to it, to be indulged, at least, with a hearing, though he may not, at first, perhaps, presume to ask for a return.

I ventured pretty far, I thought, and impatiently waited for her reply, while my looks, forcibly, I am sure, expressed the tender sensations of my soul.

On my beginning to speak upon the subject, in which I was so deeply interested, her face and neck were covered with blushes, and she threw down her eyes. — Animated by her confusion, which sufficiently proved how well she under-

understood me, I desired her to tell me, if she was not of my opinion?

She was silent a little while longer, and then, raising her eyes, with a dignity and spirit in them which I had never seen before, and withdrawing her hand, which I had held in mine, replied, — The man, Sir, who addresses a woman upon a subject to which she is not at liberty to listen, is neither capable of loving, nor esteeming her as he ought; he is guilty also of the greatest affront to her Understanding, and her Principles, by supposing her weak enough, and immoral enough to give the least encouragement to him.

Charmed to find her virtuous in the strictest sense of the word, yet mortified, at the same time, to find every sort of indulgence prohibited by the severity

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severity of her virtue, I sighed aloud with regret; pained with my disappointment; pained to think that the very principles I admired were too rigid for my peace; still more pained to think that the most capital faults were venial in the Husband, while those of a fairer complexion in a Lover were not to be tolerated.

I stood, and looked at her with a despondence in my countenance which sufficiently declared my feelings. At last I had, after a pretty long silence, the satisfaction to hear her sigh, though very softly. — She turned away her head to hide her emotions, and strove, by an affected cough, to prevent my attending to what she wished to hide from me.

I sometimes think that I may venture to affirm she loves me. Her discretion



discretion is amazing ;— how uncommon is her behaviour !— Half her sex seem to pride themselves on being indiscreet. I am sure I will not pretend to imitate her Discretion ; if she, therefore, makes me mad with Love, she must take the consequences. — I am but man.

Adieu.

LET-

## LETTER XXXV.

*From the Same to the Same.*

**N**OW I have found it out, *George*. This *Astell*—what a vile fellow he is!—has brought his wife hither on purpose to throw her in *my* way (well knowing the force of such a temptation, to so amorous a puppy as I am) in hopes of our being taken in the fact, that he may secure a divorce, and be at liberty to marry *Kitty Burrell*, who will not yield upon any other terms.—What a heart must *she* have, who can think herself free from prostitution, by marrying such a fellow as *Astell*, after having obliged him to decoy his innocent Wife into the road of Seduction, to make room for her!—I cannot

cannot bear the thoughts of *Maria's* suffering a moment.—Her character and her peace claim all my attention—I will, therefore, be upon my guard, and slacken my assiduities, in the fight, at least, of *Astell* and *Kitty*. —

You will ask me, perhaps, how I came to suspect such diabolical designs? I'll tell you. I overheard *Astell* informing *Kitty*, that he believed his scheme would do, that his d—'d demure devil of a Wife would most assuredly be taken in, as she must be more than Woman indeed, to resist my constant endeavours to touch her heart.

What do you think of me, then, cried *Kitty* to him; do you suppose that I am not as susceptible of *Byron's* merit as Mrs. *Astell* is?

Merit,

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Merit, Child? replied he, — nothing but downright personal merit can please *you* in a Man, I am sure; and while I can boast of *that*, I am not afraid of *Byron*, or any Man, for a Rival. — He then kissed her furiously.

Hold, Mr. *Astell*, cried she, pushing him from her, you come no nearer till you have the same authority over me, as you have over Mrs. *Astell*.

And what a confounded long while will it be before that happens, Child? Suppose we catch them in the fact, I shall have a d—'d deal of trouble with Proctors, and Doctors, &c. &c. In short, it is so difficult a matter to get rid of a Wife, that I really, from my soul, wonder why any man will venture to take one.

And



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And yet you are teasing me every day, said the Lady, to do the very thing you exclaim against with so much violence.

Not to marry, Child. It is you who are teasing me to marry; take notice, my Dear, I never once asked you the question in my life. I have proposed, indeed, to live and love, as long as loving would hold out, but I never should have dreamt of any thing farther, had you not come upon me flap with a positive determination to refuse me every thing, unless I would commit this cursed Matrimony; the very idea of which, makes me absolutely shudder. I am surprized to see Women so fond of it, when they have more liberty, more variety, and infinitely more pleasure, without it.

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No, Sir, that is impossible, replied the Lady; as Matrimony gives us such an unlimited power to make the veriest fools in nature of those fellows who would serve us in the same manner.

And yet I am, in the cant of the World, ruining my Wife, d—g myself, and laying up a perpetual fund of vexation in this life, and all for the sake of a little Flirt, who does nothing but make a jest of me.

You were created merely for our pleasure, replied she, that we might make Asses, Widgeons, and Dolts of you; even of the wisest and best.

Well said, *Kitty*—after all this, now, shall I venture to run my head into the most cursed of all nooses for you?

You

You may do as you please, Sir, cried she, carelessly tossing, and catching her nectarine, as if she paid no regard to him ; but you shall never have me without.

Thou dear, delicious Hoyden, said her Lover — No — your Wit and Spirit are ten times more alluring than your Beauty ; and I can neither live without the one nor the other.

Here he again attempted some more freedoms, but the Lady, afraid to trust either him or herself, started from him with an agility which he was not, at that time, prepared to oppose.

You see now what a Rascal *Astell* is — If I am not exceedingly upon my guard, I shall not only plunge myself into some disagreeable situa-

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tions with the Woman I so passionately love, but run the risque of involving her in more trying difficulties than any which she has yet experienced.

Yours most sincerely,

E. B.

L E T-



## LETTER XXXVI.

*From the Same to the Same*

IN what a scene have I been engaged ! Sure am I of being beloved, yet as sure of being ever out of the reach of that happiness which I so ardently long for, if it is possible for a woman always to keep her inclination in subjection ; an inclination which she has, inadvertently, confessed. But you shall hear, if I am capable, amidst the variety of my hopes and fears, amidst the doubts and difficulties with which I am surrounded, to give a succinct relation of what I want to communicate.

Yesterday morning, at breakfast, *Astell* proposed to *Kitty Burrell* to go a fishing on some little islands which

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are in the Lake, at the bottom of my Park. She made up her lip at his proposal, and said it was a very stupid diversion, appealing to me --- Isn't it a pure stupid way of spending time, Mr. *Byron*?

I replied, that I never had been fond of any rural sports, having always believed, that the worrying of innocent animals, &c. &c. and particularly the destruction of them, was an amusement which a Human creature could not enjoy, without divesting himself of a considerable part of his Humanity.

Mrs. *Astell* said nothing, but her looks convinced me, that *her* sentiments upon the occasion corresponded with mine.

Aye, aye, cried *Astell*, you are so *refined* in your ideas, *Byron*, and are pos-

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possest of such very *delicate* sentiments, that I suppose you cannot possibly relish any species of entertainment which has not a tincture of Virtue in it. --- You are never so happy, I imagine, as when you are engaged in a soft and silky conversation with some insipid Woman.

Not chusing to enter into an argument with him just then, I only smiled an answer; and he desired me to order the boat for him and Miss *Burrell*.

I shall not go alone with you, indeed, said he; and if Mrs. *Astell* will not be of the party, I won't go at all.

I do not love the water, said Mrs. *Astell*.

That is, cried her Brute, in a rough tone, you are afraid of it. --- Half the

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men who have lost their lives upon the water, have been drowned by the tremors, and the terrors, and the nonsense of such silly Devils as *you*.

The amiable, excellent Creature, who would not, I will venture to say, hurt a fly, intentionally, looked frightened. --- I, Mr. *Astell*! I drown people! I hope not --- I never saw any body drowned in my life.

Well, then, this will be the first time, ---

Lord, how you talk! exclaimed Miss *Burrell*; you really make one afraid to go upon the water at all.

What! have you caught the infection, Child, of that Simpleton? --- Come, come, never listen to Fools. I hate, mortally, to see a Woman look terrified, as they call it. If she did  
but



but know how ugly she looks in a fright, she would soon be cured of her fears. --- Come, *Kitty*.

I won't go without Mrs. *Astell*, answered she.

Why then she must go in another boat, for, d---n me, if I will subject myself to her screaming and squalling; besides, she will certainly upset us.

Poor *Maria* turned pale, and trembled, as if she had been, indeed, at that moment, falling overboard.

*Astell*, finding that *Kitty* would not stir without Mrs. *Astell*, consented to her being of the party, provided she was not in the same boat: And I, for the sake of restoring the general tranquillity, and for some other reasons, desired she would put herself under my protection.

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There is no object more interesting to *me*, than a lovely Woman under the dominion of Terror. She, at that instant, draws our compassion to her in the most forcible manner, and inspires us with a tenderness, animating, intoxicating beyond expression.—I led Mrs. *Astell*, therefore, to the boat, though I saw that she was not quite satisfied with her situation. To encrease any little anxiety she might have felt, the wind blew rather fresh, and the boat danced. Imagining that she was apprehensive of danger, I threw one arm round her, and held her hand in mine. She made a motion to withdraw herself from my arms, but her fears detained her in them.

When we were landed, Mrs. *Astell* looked round, to see if her Husband and *Kitty* followed us. On their passing

sing by, they rowed towards a different island; she desired me to call to them, supposing they had made a mistake.— It was a wilful one, I believe, for *Astell* nodded his head at us, as much as to say, You may remain where you are, we shall not come near you.

Mrs. *Astell*, either not understanding, or pretending not to understand, the motion of his head in the manner I did, desired me to get into the boat, and to follow them. I told her, that I fancied Mr. *Astell* would not be pleased by that proceeding. ---

I came not, you know, said she, with a plaintive tone, on purpose to oblige Miss *Burrell*, as I have no taste for fishing, Mr. *Byron*.

I believe, Madam, replied I, that Miss *Burrell* will be obliged to you,

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for taking no notice of her ; but, since Fishing affords you no entertainment, will you give me leave to try to amuse you with this Book?---taking out of my pocket a volume of *Thomson's Works*, which I had accidentally put into it.---Happening to cast my eye upon the very elegant Song, of which the first line is,

“ For ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove,”

I began to read it, feelingly --- While I was reading it, I observed my companion in a tremulous situation. --- I read it indeed, I fancy, with a particular *pathos*, because I forcibly felt every word I repeated. Had I written the Song myself, upon the occasion, I could not have shown myself more affected by it. Every nerve in my body was shaken, and the warmth with which I delivered my Author's sentiments,

sus-



sufficiently proved how deeply I was interested in them. --- Yet, with all my warmth, with all my energy of pronounciation, I barely did justice to the tender and delicate sentiments which I articulated. ---

When I closed the book with the most ardent petition to the fickle Goddess, to make *the dear Amanda mine*, I saw tears fast falling down the cheeks of the Angel who sat by my side. I could hardly support so moving a sight. I could hardly restrain myself from opening my whole heart, from loudly confessing all that I had, all that I, at that very moment, endured for her. With a fervency, which could not but assure her, how much I wished to sooth her, to console her, to remove her griefs, and to make her  
as

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as happy as she deserved to be, I tenderly pressed her hand.

She hastily snatched it from me, and clapped her handkerchief up to her face, to hide her emotions, which were, unquestionably, in my favour. The pains she took to conceal them, left me no room to doubt my power over her heart.

While we both sat in a profound silence, during which she attempted to stifle the gentle sighs which swelled her lovely bosom, the clouds gathered round us, on a sudden,---or we had been too deeply engaged to observe the approaching storm.---It began to rain; but the drops were few.---

Mrs. *Astell*, who had been all along uneasy, said, as soon as she saw them, It will

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will be a heavy shower ; do, Mr. *Byron*, let us go home.

If you please, Madam, replied I, --- as there was no place to shelter her from a hard rain.

Taking her by the hand, therefore, I re-conducted her to the boat. --- Seized with a violent tremor just when she was going to put her foot into it, she fell into the water.

Imagine what I felt at that instant. I plunged in, immediately, after her ; I pulled her up, laid her, lifeless, upon the grass, called aloud for help, regardless of the fellow who left the boat, to come to our assistance. — The man, as neither he nor I had any thing to give, and she only seemed to have fainted, from the excess of her fright, said he would row home and get

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get some drops and cordials to restore her. I bade him make all possible haste.

I then knelt down on the ground by her side, and turned her gently, in order to make her throw up any water she might have swallowed.

When she, recovering, opened her eyes, and saw me busied about her, she exclaimed, with a wildness in her looks, Go, go, Mr. *Byron*; leave me to die by myself; we cannot both be saved, and I had rather suffer death a thousand times, than be the cause of yours.

We are both safe, replied I, pressing her cold, wet hands, in mine; be composed; I have had the blest fortune to preserve a life infinitely more precious to me than my own.

Oh !



Oh! no! answered she, still looking at me with inexpressible tenderness—You are not, you cannot be safe, while drenched thus in water; it will throw you into a fever, and I shall have the misery to survive you, and to know that I have killed the only Man whom I wish to preserve, who has saved my life; but, gracious God! continued she, clasping her hands together, what have I said!—Yet I hope that my gratitude to my Deliverer will excuse my—— Do not speak to me, Mr. *Byron*—do not look on me—I shall die with shame—Yet, if you are the Man I take you to be, you will consider me; you will pity me, and forget all that has escaped from me, upon an occasion which has forced from me the most important secret of my heart.

It

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It was impossible for me, circumstanced as I was, to pay the attention to her commands which I should have done at any other time—I not only gazed on her with unutterable transport, but I thanked her for her declarations in my favour, with expressions emphatical enough to convince her, that *my* heart was as warmly devoted to her as she could wish it, were she at liberty to accept of it; but I forbore to make any direct avowal of a passion for her; I rather appeared the affectionate, tender Friend, than the raptured Lover. *She*, however, conscious of what she had disclosed, frightened, confused, and embarrassed, interrupted me in the midst of my affectionate effusions, by assuming a more forbidding air—Pushing me from her with her hands, for I still hung  
over

over her, she cried, with hurrying accents, as if terrified by the nearness of my approaches, Leave me, Mr. *Byron*; for the love of Heaven, leave me—Go home, and get dry cloaths, and may God preserve you from falling a sacrifice to your Humanity on *my* account—make no answer—stay not any longer—if you do, I am lost for ever.

Dear Mrs. *Astell*, said I, with a heart melted with pity at her situation, while it revered her virtue, be not alarmed, nor think meanly of yourself, for a discovery which has made me the happiest of Men—But I will say no more—I will respect a delicacy which renders you doubly amiable in my eyes. You may look upon me as a declared Friend, who will ever be grateful for the sentiments you have  
con-

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condescended to entertain for him, and who will silently keep them close in his own breast, till he may safely venture to publish the happiness which he derives from them.

A rising satisfaction seemed to glimmer in her languid eyes for a moment; she then suddenly recollecting herself, trembled; evidently more shocked by her reflections, than pained by the fatigue she had undergone—No, Mr. *Byron*, said she, in a firm, solemn tone, should Fortune, after what has past, take the most favourable turn for my wishes, never, never must I, never will I indulge them. I will always endeavour to preserve my reputation as unsullied as my person.

I was going to reply, but the return of the Servant prevented me. He brought



brought with him three or four sorts of Cordials; I could not, however, prevail on her to touch any of them, till I had drank more largely than I chose to do—I could not, indeed, refuse to comply with her earnest intreaties, as those intreaties were so many strong proofs of her extreme regard for me.

When we met the next day, I addressed her with the softened voice of tender friendship, after having spent the greatest part of the night in a very disturbed state of mind, violently agitated by turns, by Joy, Hope, and Despair—Instead of receiving me in the manner I fondly expected, she appeared with looks so forbidding, that I could hardly believe her to be the Woman who had filled my heart with such transports

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ports the day before. Her eyes, however, beam with the same bewitching languor which I had then observed in them, and her accents are as melting as ever.---Her snowy skin is crimsoned with glowing blushes whenever I see her, and her whole manner is most engagingly alluring.---Nay, even her *forbidding Looks* now charm me, because they are striking marks of her Discretion. I am enraptured with her Beauty; I am awed by her Virtue; I am sure I am beloved, yet how can I be happy, as I have no hopes of possessing the Woman who loves me---No---I never shall possess her---Her Delicacy---though she is certainly more amiable, more estimable for it---will be an unsurmountable bar to the completion of my wishes, should she ever be at liberty to dispose of herself. I am, there-

therefore, exactly in the mortifying condition of *Tantalus*: The most desirable creature in the universe, has made me see that she is no less attached to me than I am to her, yet I am, at the same time, more than ever assured that she will never be mine.

Adieu.

E. B.

P. S. *Astell* scarce thanked me for saving his Wife. I believe he would have thought himself obliged to me, if I had permitted her to have been drowned.

LET-

## L E T T E R XXXVII.

*Mrs. ASTELL to Miss HALES.*

**M**Y situation grows more embarrassing every hour, my dear *Marianne*. *Byron* has saved my life, at the hazard of his own. — But that is not all; it is that has helped to endear him to me still more and more. Yet, before that happened, his manners were so tender, so touching, I was softened to a degree beyond expression.

*Mr. Astell* obliged me to go a fishing, upon some islands *Byron* has upon a Lake at the extremity of his Park. I never, you know, could conquer my fears about the water — *Byron* promised to take the greatest care of me, and said and did every thing to quiet

quiet



quiet my apprehensions, but I went, notwithstanding all his promises and encouraging behaviour, with reluctance, because I went with him alone. He is too amiable—I cannot bear his looks!—those looks, and his enchanting attentions to please me, inexpressibly affect my heart. I never could find any pleasure in fishing: He seemed as averse to the diversion as I was: He took a book out of his pocket, and read to me one of the tenderest Sonnets—It was so applicable, too, that it moved me even to tears.—My heart was melted.—I could not stifle my sensibility. A sudden shower made me request *Byron* to go home. He consented immediately. While he was leading me to the boat, glowing with confusion, from a consciousness of having shewn emotions which I should have con-

cealed from myself, as well as from  
 him, my foot slipped, and I fell into  
 the water. I was just sufficiently  
 in my senses to see Byron throw  
 himself in after-me. When I re-  
 covered, I could hardly, at first, be-  
 lieve that he had escaped with life.  
 My anxieties, my terrors, on his ac-  
 count, were so violent, that I was  
 urged by them to express my grati-  
 tude and concern, in terms much too  
 tender and affectionate, as I am the  
 Wife of another; and yet, *Marianne*,  
 I said not half what I felt. I could  
 have died with joy the next moment  
 to have had it in my power to tell  
 him all that my heart felt for him.  
 But the instant I considered how  
 much I had deviated from that De-  
 cency and Delicacy, by which a mar-  
 ried Woman should ever be distin-  
 guished, I hated myself, I despised  
 myself:

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myself: Conscious of having, by the impropriety of my behaviour, merited the contempt of the Man, who had made himself but of too much consequence in my eyes, and who had appeared sufficiently ready to take advantage of that behaviour, though in a manner so refined, that I could not discover the resentment I ought. (To say the truth, he increased both my tenderness and esteem for him by the refinement of his carriage.) I threw myself entirely upon his Honour. Is not a Woman dreadfully situated, *Marianne*, when she is more capable of trusting her Lover than herself? I called upon him to pity me, to save me — though by so doing I the more loudly proclaimed my own weakness. But you, my dear Miss *Hales*, cannot conceive what I endured at that moment. I raved,

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I believe I was certainly intoxicated, and in a delirious state. — I can only say, that by giving a free vent to the fullness of my heart, and seeing the enchanting transports which it raised in him, I became more happy, for a while, than I had ever been before; though, in the midst of my joy, I was almost overwhelmed with shame, terror, and confusion. At last, indeed, I very severely condemned my own conduct, and solemnly assured *Byron*, that, let what would happen, I would for ever banish from my mind the sentiments which I had criminally entertained. He would fain have continued to treat me with the most insinuating tenderness, under the mask of Friendship; but I strove, by every method in my power, to appear with the utmost indifference to him; very awkwardly



wardly do I strive, I am sure, because I feel myself acting against Nature, while I am acting the Indifferent to the only Man who —

Mr. *Astell* does not seem inclined to return home: He looks at me as if he was extremely displeased. My life, indeed, is rendered so unhappy, that I could gladly resign it; and I almost wish that *Byron* had not taken me out of the water; yet, if I could have just lived to have been sensible of his tenderness, and have died lamented in his arms, I should have been happy. — But, gracious Heaven! how dare I to breathe such a wish! — I, who am the Wife of another! Surely I must be frantic to talk in this manner! Indeed, *Marianne*, I must endeavour to conquer this folly: If I proceed, if I indulge my pre-

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sent thoughts, I shall, I am afraid, deserve a far less eligible epithet than foolish.

Mrs. *Oswald* is hourly expected. I was weak enough to be sorry that *Byron* invited her. — How ridiculous! I now wish to see her. Pity me, my dear Friend, and pray Heaven restore me to the use of my reason, for I am not, certainly, in my right senses.

IN CONTINUATION.

Mrs. *Oswald* is come. She has brought with her one of the most agreeable Girls you can imagine; about fourteen, with very pretty Features, and a clear brown Complexion, fine dark Eyes and Hair. She is very little, but elegantly made, and has, with the Understanding of a Woman,

a Woman, all the Innocence of a Child. Her Family are abroad; Mrs. *Oswald* has the care of her till they return. She was with a Relation of Mrs. *Oswald's* while *she* was at *Astell Park*, or else would have accompanied her. You would be pleased with this little *Juliet Farnby*, I dare say, for there is something in her very amiable. I with Mr. *Astell* may not be too much pleased with her: He talked of returning to *Astell Park* before, but now says nothing about it. All places will be, at present, disagreeable to me; yet, methinks I wish I was any where but here. With all my uneasinesses, however, and they are pretty numerous,

I am still

Yours most affectionately,

M. A.

D 4

LET-

## LETTER XXXVIII.

*From the Same to the Same.*

YOU do not write to me, *Marianne*:  
Without *your* letters I have no  
consolation, as I am deprived of your  
company.

I thought I might have found some  
satisfaction in the society of Mrs. *Of-*  
*wald*, but though she is very obliging  
and friendly, I have felt no joy since  
her arrival here. This Miss *Farnby* is  
ever in our way. You cannot think  
how *Byron* admires her; and yet I  
do not see any thing so extraordinary  
in her. --- Mrs. *Ofwald*, indeed, says,  
that he treats her quite like a Child;  
but men, in general, do not, I think,  
play so much with Girls of her age;  
for, though she is little, she is too old  
to



to be used like a Baby. I sometimes fancy, however, that he looks upon her as she really is, and only takes advantage of her size, to prevent any remarks upon his behaviour. She certainly is so fond of him, that she encourages him to take a great deal more notice of her than he would otherwise do. Mr. *Astell*, also, is prodigiously struck with her: He says that she has the most beautiful Eyes he ever beheld, and will make a very lovely Woman. Miss *Burrell* is extremely offended; in short, this little Girl has thrown us into an ill humour: She is civil to all, she is attached only to *Byron*: She hardly pays the least attention to any other person: She studies to please *him* alone; and in so artless, so unaffected a manner, that she cannot fail of being successful.--- Happily for her, she may, at *her* age, and in *her*

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state of innocence, discover what she feels, without being suspected of any designs; and *Byron*, indeed, though he takes a thousand strange liberties, behaves to *her*, as well as to other people, with a delicacy which can never give offence; which must, on the contrary, ever give pleasure, and make all hearts beat in his favour.

*Mrs. Oswald* bids me tell you, that there is not so much merit as you imagine, in her coming hither to meet me, as she had heard that Colonel *Frankton* was to be at Mr. *Mills's*, whose Park joins to *Byron Lodge*. Sir *Anthony Woodfield* is also come hither after her, though she says she has given him a definitive answer, the meaning of which he does not seem willing to comprehend, and she declares she is not sorry for it, fancying, sometimes, that

that the Colonel did not always dislike her, and that a powerful Rival, who is not a Brother, may make him discover himself.

IN CONTINUATION.

*Byron* is, undoubtedly, quite infatuated with this Girl. *Mr. Astell*, romping with her in the garden, just now threw her on the grass, and kissed her till she screamed. *Byron* flew to her assistance, raised her in his arms with a tenderness which quieted her in a moment, sat down by her side, put her Hair in order, and then guarded her, with his arm round her waist, to prevent *Mr. Astell* from coming too near her, who told him, that he was an Engrosser of all the fine Girls. He replied, casting his eyes on Miss *Farnby*, and smiling affectionately at her.







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solicitude about her was quite sufficient.

I felt my face glow --- I hated myself for having spoken so pettishly. Mr. *Astell* turned to *Kitty Burrell* with a sneering laugh. Mr. *Byron* fixed his eyes on me with a remarkable seriousness: *Juliet*, the only unembarrassed person, went and took him by the arm, and said, Come, do go with me, and I will shew you the fine jasmines which I admire so much. He actually suffered himself to be led away by her; but he first looked back at me, significantly, I thought, to see how I behaved. I believe, I hope I discovered no change of countenance. Why should I, indeed? What can I have to do with Mr. *Byron*? Indeed, *Marianne*, I am very childish; I am worse than this *Juliet*; yet, I dare say,

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say, you would condemn such a freedom, even in so young a Girl; you would, I am persuaded, laugh at us both, and with very good reason. --- Laugh at me, if you please, *Marianne*, I shall never be offended. --- I shall ever remain,

unalterably, as well as sincerely,

**Yours,**

**M.A.**

**LET.**

## LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.

MRS. *Oswald* has been here this week, and I have been so engaged, (yet I cannot tell how, neither; in entertaining my company, I suppose,) that I have not had any leisure to write. The young Friend, whom she brought with her, is an amiable Girl; small, but delicately formed. --- Her Eyes are wonderfully pretty, and her Behaviour is attractive, to a degree surprizing, in so young a Child. If she was older, and had I never seen Mrs. *Astell*, I believe I should be absolutely charmed with her --- She will be an extreme pretty Woman. She has taken a considerable step towards fixing my heart, by a violent attachment

ment



ment to me. She has singled me out. She has distinguished me in a particular manner. --- She has all the innocence of a Child, with all the tenderness of a Woman : Her *naïveté* renders her astonishingly pleasing. I play with her all day, as much to blind *Astell*, who would behave to her in a very different style, if she would let him, as from an inclination to the Girl, and because I think it may make him cease to connive, ridiculously, nay, criminally, at the seduction of one of the most deserving of Women, on purpose to get rid of her, in order to marry another, whom he would use as ill, after having been united to her a little while. --- These are the motives by which, I can truly say, I am actuated; and yet I thought yesterday, that Mrs. *Astell* was disconcerted by my behaviour to Miss *Farnby*.

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by. Surely she cannot imagine I am really fond of such a Child. --- Her suspecting carriage, however, plainly discovered how sensibly she would be touched, were I to shew a preference to any other Woman. --- How soothing is that idea! how delightful! to be loved by the Woman on whom my soul doats! --- Might I but return it! I am sometimes so transported with the hopes of being, one day, authorized to call her mine, that I can hardly keep within the bounds I have prescribed myself --- Yet I would rather perish than make her unhappy; I must, therefore, calm her fears, and quiet her apprehensions about this *Juliet*, who hangs upon me like a fond Sister, and will not be shaken off.

Yours, as usual,

E.B.

L E T-

## LETTER XL.

*Mrs. OSWALD to Miss HALES.**Byron Lodge.*

MRS. *Astell* has informed you, my dear Miss *Hales*, of my being here, and of my having a very desirable Neighbour. We have met twice: Mr. *Byron* obligingly invited him to dine at the Lodge, to take up his residence, indeed, here; he declined the last invitation, peremptorily, and was, with difficulty, prevailed on by us to accept of the first: No man, however, could acquit himself more agreeably than he did; no man was more entertaining than he during the day; rather shy to *me*, but to every body else quite easy; amiable beyond expression. I was intoxicated with his  
plea-

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pleasantry, though I only showed it by my admiration. I could hardly see any body else : I became, at last, almost angry to find myself the only person totally neglected, and flirted a little with Sir *Anthony*, (who happened, just at that time, to come to visit me,) on purpose to see what effect it would have upon *Framp-ton* :—No effect at all: He was immoveable ; not the least alteration was perceptible in him: I believe, therefore, I must e'en give him up; it is very mortifying, however, *Mari-  
anne*, that I can make no impression at all on the Man whom I have singled out as my only Favourite ; and yet I am quite happy, compared with our poor dear friend Mrs. *Astell*, who receives fresh insults every day from the Man who ought to be her Protector, her Lover. It is better, a thousand times,

to



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to be unmarried, than to meet with her fate. How amiable, how exemplary is her character! What a brute is *Astell*, to neglect, to be unkind to, so deserving a Wife! She is no object of envy as a married Woman; but as a Woman admired by so charming a Fellow as *Byron*, she is enviable. *Byron* is, without doubt, passionately fond of her, though he makes no improper discovery of his sentiments, and she commands herself sufficiently to behave to him with a discretion which does honour to her sex. I also very much esteem *Byron* for a conduct which is equally respectable. He is exceedingly pleased with Miss *Farnby*, who is a very fine Girl, and has taken such a fancy to him, that were she a little older, I should be afraid of her; she is rather too young, I think, to fall in love with him. She behaves  
to

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to him, as if he was a near relation, but a relation for whom she had a violent affection. However, as my stay here will be short, it will not, I hope, be attended with any bad consequences. I am more alarmed at her being so intimate with *Kitty Burrell*, whose behaviour is very indiscreet, indeed. I have hinted, more than once, to her, that I thought so, but my hints have made no alteration in her, as *Astell* is perpetually talking to her, and rendering both himself and her extremely ridiculous. I shall take an opportunity to lecture her still more seriously about her carriage. I shall endeavour to make her sensible of the impropriety of it.—Tis a thousand pities, that such a Girl should be lost for want of care: Her education has been prodigiously neglected; yet one would imagine, that a Girl with a tolerable

lorable understanding, might easily see in how contemptible a light she appears, by encouraging a Man, so loose in his principles, as *Astell*. I have often wondered at the Girls for choosing to have married Men their Lovers; for, setting aside the criminal proceedings of which they are guilty, by seducing Husbands from their Wives, they cannot but know, that a creditable connection with them is out of the question, and that they hinder themselves from being reputably settled in the world. I should talk very largely to *Juliet Farnby* upon this subject, were she to stay with me; but, at present she is too young, I imagine, to have any notions about the impropriety of her conduct put into her head. She has luckily chose *Byron*, and abhors *Astell* as much as one would wish her to do: She, therefore, needs no instruction

con-

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concerning *him*. I can trust her with *Byron*, because he is in love with another; and, were he not engaged, I do not believe that he would take any unbecoming freedoms with such a Girl. --- Yet I wish *Juliet* would set bounds to her partiality for him.

IN CONTINUATION.

I was just going to fold up my letter when I received one from an unknown hand, which gives me a very friendly caution about Sir *Anthony*. He keeps two Women, it seems, at this very time, and has been lately engaged in some affairs which do him not the least credit. --- I had no intentions, indeed, of uniting myself to Sir *Anthony*, but I am, notwithstanding, obliged to the Writer; who, whether a Male, or a Female, for there is no name, could  
only



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only be prompted by a benevolent desire to save me from a disagreeable---perhaps a dangerous---alliance.

I am,

My dear Miss Hales,

Yours invariably,

H. O.

VOL. II.

E

LET.

## L E T T E R XLI.

*From the Same to the Same.*

I Am in such an agitated state, that I can scarce hold my pen, and yet I must open my heart to you; for Mrs. *Astell*, though she kindly shares my distress, is so tormented by her Tyrant, that she cannot attend so minutely to my vexations, as if her own mind was more at ease.

Colonel *Frampton*—Would you believe it? the very Colonel *Frampton*, who always appeared so cool, and so indifferent about me, has fought with Sir *Anthony Woodfield* upon my account, as it is said. I really do not know upon what other occasion they could have quarrelled, for they never saw

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saw each other but on the day they met here, till this dispute happened. I am very much concerned at it, yet I cannot say I am not transported to find, that *Frampton* loves me well enough to hazard his life for me. I am terrified, however, beyond expression, lest he should not recover, for I hear that he is wounded; not dangerously, indeed, they say, yet there is no depending upon any thing one hears. I cannot conceive why he thought it necessary to fight for me. If he had had the slightest penetration, he might have seen plainly, that I should have given him sufficient encouragement. Nothing could have been more absurd, than his risking his life for a Woman, to whom he had not made the smallest application; for whom he had rather discovered a kind of indifference. Were

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I not unaccountably prepossessed in his favour, I should be ready to give up all thoughts of him. Duelling is, in my opinion, so contrary to the dictates of Humanity, to the Duty we owe our Creator, our Neighbour, and Ourselves, that I am sorry, I confess, to find the Man, I so highly esteemed, so ready to fall into it. He has lessened himself in my eyes by this rash proceeding; yet, when I consider that he is a Soldier, I feel myself disposed to make some allowances for his behaviour.

This affair has strangely disturbed my mind: I have a great deal of reason to be dissatisfied with *Framp-ton*, but I cannot bring myself to be indifferent about him. I still wish I could, consistently with my situation, visit him frequently, in order  
to



to give him all the assistance of a tender Friend, and to do all in my power to promote his Recovery—his Happiness. I shall not be able, I believe, to hinder myself from calling to see him: I have an extreme curiosity to hear, from his own mouth, the cause of a behaviour, which appears to me so strange: If he can make it appear, that he has acted in a manner the least deserving of my pardon, I feel I must—I feel I do already—acquit him—My too susceptible heart *has* acquitted him.

Tell me, my dear Miss *Hales*, tell me freely, what you think of this unaccountable affair; and let me know how you should be prompted to act upon so trying an occasion.

Mrs. *Astell* declares, she does not know what advice to give; but she

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is so perplexed herself, 'tis no wonder she is not at leisure to consider the affairs of her friends, with the attention they wish her to bestow upon them. Mr. *Byron* was so kind as to call on *Frampton*, but he could not see him.— I am, therefore afraid, that he is very ill.— I am half distracted.

Adieu.

LET-

## L E T T E R XLII.

Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.

I HAVE watched Mrs. *Astell* very closely: I think I see my suspicions every hour confirmed—She certainly dislikes my taking so much notice of *Juliet Farnby*, and discovers, if I am not grossly mistaken, strong marks of jealousy.

Transported at so interesting a discovery, and longing to do every thing in my power to make the dear cause of my joy as happy as myself, I sought for an opportunity to be alone with her—I obtained it at last, but with much difficulty, as she has, since the arrival of *Juliet*, rather avoided me.

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I followed her into the garden this morning—She saw me, though she affected *not* to see me, and walked from me as fast as she could.

I hurried after her, overtook her, and, throwing my arm round her, asked her why she ran from me so fast?

She blushed, and, striving to disengage herself from me, said, she was going home.

You are just come out, replied I, seizing her hand again.

The wind is too high, answered she, casting down her fine eyes, as if to shun the ardent gaze of mine.

I will conduct you to a place where there is no wind, said I,  
pray



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pray let me have a moment's conversation with you.

She coloured again, looked confused, and suffered me, though with a seeming reluctance, to lead her to a sheltered seat: Sheltered from the intruding air, and still more closely sheltered from the observation of *Impertinence*.

I believe, indeed, that she expected to hear me say something not fit for her to listen to, though she might feel a strong desire to be acquainted with it; but I had too much respect for her, I loved her too sincerely, to be guilty of such an insult—I began, therefore, a conversation upon general subjects, and gradually introduced a topic, which led me to mention, apparently through inadvertence, *Juliet*. After the mention of *Miss Farn-*

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by, I proceeded to let Mrs. *Astell* know that I had not the slightest inclination for her, and that I only looked upon her as a very pleasing Child, who might, with proper management, make an agreeable Woman some years hence.

She appeared satisfied with this part of the conversation, as it quieted her apprehensions, but I hope that she was disappointed on my not entertaining her with a more interesting address; I flatter myself that she really felt a disappointment upon the occasion, for she suppressed some rising sighs several times—I would have her sick for me, though I dare not tell her so. *Astell*, I fancy, (as well as *Kitty Burrell*,) begins to have no hopes of my succeeding with the lovely *Maria*. I fancy, too, that he  
will

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will take her away soon: I scarce know whether I shall be sorry or glad at her removal: For though I now have the Felicity—most people would call it a Felicity---of being forever with the dear Object whom I adore, yet since I must neither speak to her of my passion, nor give it a vent by the methods usually adopted by Lovers, I am more dissatisfied with my situation, than if we were separated. I am not one of your romantic Sighers, who can entirely subsist upon the Pleasures of Imagination; I must have substantial joys. I have no idea of feeding always upon my own chimeras---But we are likely to have other amours upon the carpet for our amusement.

Colonel *Frampton* has fought with Sir *Anthony Woodfield* about Mrs. *Oswald*,  
E. 6.

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*wald*, as it is given out; he disarmed his Antagonist, after having first received a wound in his arm. Poor Mrs. *Oswald* was ready to faint when the intelligence was communicated to her, though she endeavoured, with all possible address, to prevent us from perceiving the effect it had on her spirits; I pitied her; I feel for all those who are under the dominion of the gentle God, who frequently exerts his power in a very ungentle manner: I therefore took an opportunity to tell her, in a whisper, that I would call on *Frampton* myself.

I went to him; but they informed me, by his order, I suppose, that he was not able to see any body.

I called again, and found him not so much wounded as I had heard he was.—I did not, however, think  
it



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it proper for him to talk a great deal, nor, indeed, did he seem inclined.

I told him that a Lady at my house had expressed an uncommon concern for him—He made no answer. I then desired to know the ground of his quarrel.

He replied, that he had not had any quarrel; that Sir *Anthony Woodfield* had challenged him, though he had never spoke to Sir *Anthony*, nor seen him, but on the afternoon, at my house. He was unwilling, I perceived, to enter into particulars about the affair; I did not think it necessary, therefore, to be impertinent: Yet I believe Mrs. *Oswald* would not have been sorry if my curiosity had been more alive. --- How do the wisest and best of Women love to know

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know and hear every thing! I have seen Women, with superior Understandings to the majority of their Sex, and capable of employing their time in the most rational manner, unsurmountably curious. --- I never could account for the insatiable curiosity of such Women. I have not yet discovered such a curiosity in Mrs. *Astell*; but were she heartily in love, she might, perhaps, be as inquisitive as any of her Sex can possibly be. An anxious desire to be acquainted with every thing relating to the Person for whom we have a tender regard, is extremely natural. I should be glad to see a little more anxiety in her about me; yet I would, on no account, have her uneasy, not even *on my* account, though I fear it will never be in my power to make her happy. This apprehension sometimes makes me affect *indifference*;

at

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at the very time when I ardently long  
to disclose every impassioned wish of  
my soul.

I am,

my dear GRAY,

Yours, &c.

E. B.

LET-

## LETTER XLIII.

*Mrs. OSWALD to Miss HALES.*

I HAVE been charmed and provoked beyond all reason. Was there ever such an amiable, such a teasing Man as this *Frampton*! --- Would you believe it, *Marianne*, I could not rest till I saw him myself, till I knew, from his own mouth, the motives for his conduct with regard to my share in the duel; accordingly, I went to see him.

I was not immediately admitted, though I sent up my name. To say truth, I was ashamed to be kept waiting, and, when I was introduced to him, I was not a little embarrassed; but my embarrassment was nothing to *Frampton's*; he looked like scarlet: He



He arose, however, from his chair, (for I had staid till he quitted his bed before I went up,) and, taking my hand, led me to one opposite to it.

You do me a great deal of honour, Madam, said he.

I told him, in reply, that I came to enquire after his health, but not to thank him for risking his life about any affair in which I was concerned.—He smiled, and said, that I was mistaken, as he had never thought it consistent with *my* honour, or his own, to push *himself* into the presence of his Maker, unsolicited, or to drive any other Man, against whom he had no enmity, into the same condition.

I looked, I believe, as I felt, surprised at his saying that he had no enmity against Sir *Barbary*.

He

## THE UNREASONABLE WIFE.

My dear Mr. Thomas, I beg to  
inform you that your application  
has been received in the following man-  
ner: My father-in-law, with that  
Gentleman, Master, was in con-  
sequence of a challenge which I re-  
ceived from him. — I find every thing  
that could be planned against Dr.  
Thomas, but when the day arrived  
for the trial, I offered that I  
would do nothing in my power to  
prevent the marriage, with which  
you are so much associated, being  
performed, and that on the day  
of the marriage, I would do every  
thing in my power to prevent the  
marriage from being celebrated. I  
am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Yours, &c.

he had shown me no particular regard. — The conclusion of his speech, put me quite out of humour with myself. — I was heartily vexed to find that I could make nothing of this Man, as he, instead of discovering the slightest partiality for me, had said enough to induce me to believe that he had rather an aversion to me. I felt myself, indeed, exceedingly disappointed, but finding that I failed to my purpose, I determined to give up all thoughts of him, if possible, and endeavour to drive him from my memory. yet I could not resist the temptation which presented itself, and I determined to write him a letter, which was I afterwards informed, printed in my country paper.

At last, a messenger at the door, roused me. I looked at my watch, and found it was half past five. I rose, and, finding the way of taking leave of me; I went

at the same time, as if he feared that my reputation might be injured by the compliment I had paid him, though he did not say so in direct terms. --- That surmise, I confess, made me quite angry, Miss *Hales*: I turned about with a spirit which I thought I never could have assumed, and replied, ---I understand you perfectly, Sir: This violent concern for my character is only put on to disguise an Aversion which I have, for some time, taken notice of: But be assured, Colonel *Frampton*, however mean and despicable I may be in *your* eyes, my reputation is too well established to suffer from my only calling on a Gentleman to thank him for a favour which he had, I imagined, conferred upon me, by his interposition on my account.

When



When I had spoken these words, I walked towards the door, rather in a hurry, though I saw nobody appear.

He followed me, and stopped me. Taking my hand, he cried, Good God, Mrs. Oswald, why must we ever misunderstand each other thus? You really behold me in a very wrong light. — Stay a moment, continued he, looking at me in a very particular manner; since you have kindly condescended to come to me, stay, and permit me to disclose my Heart's every secret to you. — My Heart, added he, fondly pressing my hand, has been yours alone, from the time I first had the happiness of being acquainted with you; a happiness for which I have since paid dear, having, with the utmost difficulty, kept my passions from revolting against my principles.

I do

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I do not know what difficulties you may have encountered, Colonel, said I; interrupting him, (no longer being able to conceal sentiments which I should have divulged before, had I not dreaded the glaring impropriety of speaking first,) but I know that I have too good an opinion of you, to suppose you will act without a due regard to Delicacy and Honour.

I hope I never shall act in opposition to them, Madam, answered he, letting go my hand, but I must shew a disregard for them both, if I attempt to aspire at the happiness of calling you mine.

I was pained by this assertion, delivered with a seriousness which increased my disquiet.

I cannot comprehend you, said I, with an embarrassed air, quite abashed at

at having discovered my affection for him, and yet dreading to lose so fair an opportunity of declaring the sentiments of my heart.---I do not understand you, Sir. If the Expressions which you have uttered in my favour are sincere, what should prevent the happiness you wish to enjoy, if I do not oppose it?

Here I stopped: I could not have spoken another word, if my life had depended upon the delivery of it. I felt my face and neck as hot as fire. I hung my head; nobody can conceive a more foolish figure than I made at that moment. *Frampton* saw my distress, and was affected by it. Instantly seizing both my hands, he cried, Forgive me, dear Mrs. *Oswald*, if I think myself obliged to renounce favours so dear to my heart, favours, which

which I would purchase, even the momentary enjoyment of them, with my life, but I cannot be unjust, I cannot be ungenerous.

I do not yet understand you, said I, suffering him to detain my hand. I will explain myself immediately, Madam. Were I to take advantage of your sentiments in my behalf, how could I reconcile myself to the acceptance of your very kind offer with either the esteem or the tenderness which I feel for you? Can I love the Woman as I ought, by desiring, for the mere gratification of my selfishness, to quarter myself upon her fortune, and to expose her to the idle talk of the world, who might say, she purchased a Husband with it?

And why should we mind the talk of the world, replied I, gaining a little courage,



courage, from hearing only such trifling objections.--- Are we to give up our happiness, when it may be obtained with honour, merely because idle people, not half so happy as ourselves, condemn us?---Charming Reasoner! I heard him say, softly, to himself. ---Nobody, Madam, added he, aloud, can approve of a Man's acting meanly in the transactions with a Woman whom he loves: And were even this difficulty to be got over, I cannot venture to ask you to accept of me, as my Brother, from whom I have received so many marks of friendship, and who first knew, first loved you, will always imagine, in that case, that I have endeavoured to supplant him. Instead of taking any steps to destroy *his* happiness, it is highly incumbent on me to do all in my power to promote it.

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Delighted to find the Man, whom I had so long esteemed, so thoroughly deserving, yet vexed, at the same time, to see him so nicely scrupulous, I scarce knew how to bring myself to persuade him to act against his conscience. I thought him, indeed, too delicately conscientious, but as my affection for him increased with my esteem, I looked upon him as a character uncommonly great, uncommonly amiable; and being irresistibly prompted to wish to spend my days with such a Man, I could not resist the tenderness with which he inspired me.—My heart swelled with sensations, which I could not express by words; my tears supplied the place of words, and I gave a free vent to them. I covered my face with my handkerchief, but was soon obliged to remove it by *Pruncheon's* animated

animated behaviour.—What do you mean, Mrs. *Oswald*? said he, eagerly; for Heaven's sake do not distress me in this manner—I can bear your anger, because I know you will not be angry with me without a sufficient reason, but I cannot bear these tears—

What would you have me do? said I—You assure me, that you feel an affection for me, at the very moment you seem determined to make me unhappy, by positively refusing to accept of my hand.

Because I cannot accept of it with Honour, replied he: I am, consequently, unworthy of it.

There was no talking any longer to so strange a Man.—I could not oblige him to marry me, I therefore

rose, in a pet, I believe, and walked towards the door.

He stopped me, caught hold of both my hands, and pressing them in his, said, Stay one moment, only to make a small addition to the goodness you have already shewn me, by assuring me, that I am forgiven for every syllable which I may inadvertently have uttered to offend you, and by promising still to favour me with your Friendship.

How, cried I, hastily, how can I make such a promise, when I may, perhaps, be married to some other Man?

He changed colour, let both my hands drop from his, and, turning away his face, cried, May the God of Heaven bless you, Madam, and make



make you happy with a Man who is deserving of you!

And now, *Marianne*, what can I do with this Man? May I not say, without blushing, that I love him a thousand times more than ever.— Did he ask for my Friendship? He shall have it; and I must contrive to make it advantageous to him, or I shall never be at rest: But in what manner? There's the difficulty. — I have gained one considerable point, however, by knowing certainly that he loves me.—His Love for me is not to be questioned: I see it in his eyes; I feel it in his touch, while it trembles on his tongue. To be assured that we are beloved by the person, for whom we feel the sincerest affection—how delightful is the sensation! However, I will not tire you

any longer by talking of myself, or of the Man, whom I cannot help looking on as a second self.

I have talked very seriously to *Kitty Burrell*, and I hope to make her sensible of her indiscretion; but I imagine that *Ashell's* ill-humour, added to his passion for variety, will do more towards her reformation, than any thing I can say upon the subject to her.

I asked her, how she could suffer a married Man to take liberties with her which ought not to be permitted in a single one?

She replied, that, at first, she never thought about it, but encouraged Mr. *Ashell's* freedoms merely for a little amusement; and that when she was used to them, she could not give any check to them.

But

But did you never consider, said I, the Folly, the Crime, indeed, of endeavouring to make a Man hate and behave ill to his Wife, a very amiable Woman, a Woman who had done nothing, at any time, intentionally, to offend him.

She answered, I never shewed any dislike to Mrs. *Astell*; I really have no sort of aversion to her. She is very well married, I think, in the common acceptation of the word: That is, she has a young handsome Husband, fine Houses, and fine Jewels, Cloaths, Equipage, and Servants at her command, and might do what she pleased, if she had but spirit enough not to mind her Husband. — For *my* part, I know not how to live without pleasure, and have not a fortune sufficient to support me accord-

F 4

ing

ing to my wishes—I must, therefore, look out for an advantageous Marriage. Now, as *Astell* has assured me, that he waits for an opportunity to be divorced from Mrs. *Astell*, in order to marry me, I think I cannot do better than to give him all proper encouragement; at least, till something more eligible offers itself.

You do not reflect, all this while, replied I, on the injury you are doing Mrs. *Astell*?

No, really, said the giddy Girl, I never think about it. If I do wrong, it will be merely for want of reflection. *Astell* assures me, that Mrs. *Astell* and *Byron* are very fond of each other, and that if he can but surprize them together, he will sue for a Divorce, as he is heartily tired of her.

Mighty



Mighty well, answered I. — And did it never enter into your head, that he may be as heartily tired of you? Such a fickle Man, Miss *Burrell*, can never be constant to any Woman. Mrs. *Astell* deserves the faithfullest of Husbands; she is not only uncommonly beautiful in her Person, but of a most excellent Disposition; mild, even-tempered, patient, and, in point of Discretion, superior to the greatest part of her Sex. Such a fickle Man as Mr. *Astell*, Miss *Burrell*, will never, I imagine, be constant to you. — I should be very much afraid of a Man, who is capable of endeavouring to corrupt his own Wife: If so exemplary a Woman is not safe, who can expect security from her Husband, who has solemnly sworn to protect her? Besides, the Woman must be very indelicate, in my opinion,

THE UNFASHIONABLE WIFE.

who can bring herself to like a Man  
of the type I have been speaking of.

Lord! said she, do you suppose  
that I ever liked *Abel*, Mrs. Oswald?  
Not I, indeed! I never troubled my  
head about him; I only wanted to be  
Gentle. I don't care *for* him,  
said she, snapping her fingers, in a  
manner sufficient to discover a total  
want of that Delicacy and Good-breed-  
ing, so necessary to make the most  
sensible and best-inclined Women,  
completely agreeable. By dint of ex-  
ercising, however, I at last obliged the  
unwieldy Creature to own, that she  
thought she had been wrong, and to  
promise to make a change in her  
conduct. I fancy we shall be all  
the happier for this. I should  
be infinitely glad to stop, to see what  
Mrs. Oswald will make of her  
recovery.

**THE UNFASHIONABLE WIFE. 107**

recovery, but I suppose he will behave just as he did before. — I am, insensibly, falling upon the old subject again; it agitates my thoughts; but I should not impertinently intrude upon the time of my Friends with it. Take your revenge, therefore, my dear *Marianne*, and send a few words about *Randolph*, to

**Your very affectionate Friend,**

**H. Oakes**

**H. O.**

**H. O.**

## LETTER XLIV.

*Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.*

*Byron Lodge.*

**A**STELL, finding that he cannot make his charming Wife answer his purpose, is going to leave us. Mrs. *Oswald* must, of course, quit the Lodge also. She would rather, I believe, stay, while *Frampton* continues in my neighbourhood ; but to remain in the house with a single young Fellow, when her matronly Friend is gone, will be — as she is a fine young Widow, — to commit a most violent indiscretion. — *Juliet Farnby*, it is true, would be with her, yet her being here would not be the thing, according to *her* opinion. *Juliet* is a  
very



very pleasing Girl ; and Mrs. *Oswald* is a very amiable Woman ; I may be safely trusted with them both : I have a sincere friendship for them both ; but the Friendship between the two Sexes generally produces Love.

I find I shall very sensibly feel the absence of the dear, agreeable Woman, to whom I am so strongly attached ; and knowing with how much brutality she will be treated by her execrable Husband, I shall endure many anxieties on *her* account.

*Kitty Burrell* goes with the *Astells*. She conducts herself, I think, with rather more prudence ; yet she is not a suitable Companion for Mrs. *Astell*, who has been persuading Mrs. *Oswald* to go home with her. I strenuously seconded her request, but we could not carry our point. Setting aside her reasons

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reasons concerning her own private affairs, she does not, I believe, chuse to have *Juliet* in the house with *Astell*, especially as she is entrusted with the care of her, till her Relations either return to *England*, or send for her to them. Mrs. *Oswald* is quite a proper Guardian for such a fine young Girl. I have tried to serve the former. I have talked to *Frampton* a good deal lately, and given him encouragement to believe, that he might succeed with the Lady, if he made any attempts to gain her: — He answered in such a manner, t'other day, as to give me no reason to think he had a strong inclination for her: I have since thought, however, that he *has* a design upon her heart; but he talks so oddly about her, that I do not well know what he would have: Indeed, I fancy he does not know himself.

*The UNFASHIONABLE WIFE.* III

self. He has a strange reserve about him, which is not at all agreeable; yet Mrs. *Oswald* is exceedingly attached to him; and, as she is extremely amiable, I wish to see her happy. *Frampton*, with all his oddities, is, I will venture to say, a worthy Fellow--- But I must prepare for my last interview with this charming Mrs. *Astell*—The thoughts of it actually disorder me—I do not know how I shall conduct myself. My heart urges me to fly to sympathize with her's;—yet I respect her; I love her too much to give a loose to my tongue—I dare not even let my eyes tell her what I feel, lest I should increase her disquiet.

In this awkward, and ineligible situation, is, at present,

Yours, as usual,

E. B.

## LETTER XLV.

*Mrs. ASTELL to Miss HALES.**Astell Park.*

WE are here again, my *Marianne*.  
 I wished, indeed, to leave *Byron Lodge*, but I felt a regret at my departure from it, which made me half angry with myself. Yet even this place, to which I wanted to return, dull, insipid, disagreeable as it is, would be, if Mr. *Astell* was tolerably good humoured, a Paradise, I think; but he is very fretful just now. He went to Lord *Freelove's* as soon as he came hither; and, though his Lordship is upon the verge of another world, they sat down to Picquet. Mr. *Astell* lost a considerable sum;  
 when



when he returned, he told us, that my Lord, though a dying Man, had no conscience, but played with as much keenness as if he was to live these twenty years.

Mr. *Astell* says he shall go to *Bath*. I have desired to go with him, but he has refused me. I do but my duty, I think, in asking to accompany him : Change of place will also, perhaps, be of service to me, and help to drive from my mind the ideas which disturb it ; which have, almost every moment, disturbed it since I left *Byron Lodge*. With what delicacy did the Master of the House behave, when the time of separation approached ! — He sat down by me, when I was alone in the Garden, without speaking to me for some minutes.

Such

114 THE MISERABLE WIFE.

Such a glance, as it was attended with looks but too expressive—though unspoken—was more affecting than words: I could not think of a syllable to utter. I had not the most trifling expressions ready. I opened my mouth more than once, but I shut it again—I was going at last to rise, but I sat still: I sat and sighed.

“You sigh,” said he, laying his hand on mine, and gently pressing it; “you are, perhaps, unwilling to leave the man who must suffer so severely from your absence: and yet you do not think proper to honour him with the disclosure of your sentiments: Nor will I ask for any thing you do not wish to grant. Adieu—Only permit me, as your most affectionate Friend, to believe that you have some esteem

often for me, and that you will sometimes think of me as I deserve.

I was so much affected, my Dear, that I could only bring out—I will—and then, rose to go.

Will you leave your Friend, already? cried he, with a supplicating tone—Who can tell when we shall meet again?

I stopped--- Those few words pierced my heart--- A tender inclination strongly impelled me to stay, but Discretion commanded me to retire--- I stood wavering.

One moment, cried Byron, with looks which would have penetrated the bosom of Infidelity, while he threw his arm round me--- One moment.

I dared not to trust myself with him---let me go---let me go, Mrs.

Byron,

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*Byron*, replied I, in faltering accents---it is time for me to go in.

The pride and pleasure of my life is to obey you, Madam, said he: may Heaven but give me more frequent opportunities.

He sighed, and let me go. I hurried towards the house, though I hardly knew how I got to it.

The next morning, when Mr. *Astell* was going to put Miss *Burrell* into the coach, *Byron* took my hand, and, with a respectful air, thanked me for the honour I had done him, for the happiness I had given him, by accompanying Mr. *Astell*.

I curtsied, and he led me to the coach-door---There he stood till it drove off, and removed me from his sight---Perhaps for ever.

I am



I am low spirited, my Dear, beyond expression; Mrs. *Oswald* is gone home, and I have nobody to speak to but Miss *Burrell*, who, though she behaves much better than she did, can never be like my Dear *Marianne*; and she will soon have no leisure to attend to the tiresome, unavailing complaints of her ever affectionate,

M. ASTELL.

P. S. I have said too much, I fear, upon a subject but too near my heart---Forget it, and destroy this Letter---Forget the folly of your *Maria*. Mr. *Astell* has just consented to let me go with him to *Bath*.

LET-

## L E T T E R XLVI.

Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.

SHE is gone! The dear amiable cause of all my pains and pleasures has left me! And to what place her Husband will drag her next I cannot possibly tell. Our parting has affected me, even more than I believed it would have done. I am perpetually hurrying, to those spots which seemed to be agreeable to *her*, and in which I generally found her while she was at the *Lodge*. But what a ridiculous folly is this? and do I not, by this behaviour, nourish a passion, to the destruction of my peace? If Mrs. *Astell* was with me, I should, probably, by that behaviour, destroy *her* peace, and do her an injury not to be repaired by

by my fondest love. It would certainly be wiser for us both to keep as far from each other as possible. Yet I must complain of the cruel necessity which renders this separation inevitable, and regret the delightful moments which are past; the present ones are all joyless and forlorn.

IN CONTINUATION.

I have been interrupted by a Letter from Lady *Somerset*. She informs me of my Brother's being dangerously ill at *Paris*, just when he was proposing to return to *England*, and intreats me to come and see him, if possible. I cannot refuse a request so earnestly urged. As a Brother, as a Friend, I cannot refuse it. I shall set out, therefore, as soon as I have made the necessary preparations, after having first called upon Mrs. *Oswald*. I cannot  
leave

leave *England* without *one* enquiry after Mrs. *Astell*; without recommending her, with additional warmth, to the care of her Friend, should *Astell* strike out any new schemes to torment her.--- I am going.

Adieu.

LET-



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L E T T E R XLVII.

*From the Same to the Same.*

*Paris.*

**I** Arrived here three days ago, and found my Brother very ill of a violent fever, but out of danger. I am not at all sorry now that I came hither, setting aside the pleasure which my haste to see Lord S— has given him. My mind has been amused, and prevented from dwelling too intensely on the amiable *Maria*. I have taken a method, however, to hear frequently of her, without her knowing any thing of the matter.

I went to take leave of Mrs. *Oswald* before I set out, and to intreat her to correspond with me.

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She

She exclaimed, in accents of pleasure, --- Nothing could have happened more fortunately for me, Mr. *Byron*, if you will make me happy by receiving Miss *Farnby* under your protection. I have just had a letter from *Paris*. Mr. and Mrs. *Farnby* desire that she may be sent to them with a Friend of mine, in whom I can place a confidence. You are that Friend, Mr. *Byron* --- May I be permitted to ask such a favour of you? Miss *Farnby* will have a Governess to attend her, but it is by no means proper that she should go with her alone. --- I have been wishing for such a Man as you to protect her.

I told her, that she did me a great deal of honour. When I had enquired particularly after Mrs. *Astell*, she called *Juliet* down. The lovely Girl

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Girl flew to me with all the joy imaginable, gave me her hand, and begged me to let her go with me.

We had a pleasant passage. My young Charge was not sick at all, but spent her time chiefly upon deck, asking me a thousand questions; and I declare, the pleasure which I felt in giving her the requested information, lessened the anxiety which I endured on Lord S——'s account.

Lady S——, on my arrival, relieved me, by the hopes of my Brother's recovery, and appeared extremely glad to see me. She took upon herself the care of conducting Miss *Farnby* to her Father and Mother, and she gave them so much pleasure by so doing, that they returned her visit the next day, in order to express the sense they had of the honour she had done

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is no harm in it; yet still, as we do not know what people may say, it is better to take care not to give them reason to talk.

You are a very good Girl, *Juliet*, said I; you do not know how exceedingly your Discretion pleases me.

I am glad, Mr. *Byron*, said she, pressing my hand which held her's, and looking up in my face with a *naïveté* infinitely attractive, you don't know how exceedingly I wish to please you; and, when I am favoured with your approbation, I please myself also, because I have a very great opinion of your judgment.

Shall I confess that this little Girl's compliments flattered my Vanity? --- How much weakness do we discover, *Gray*, with our boasted Understandings,

**The UNFASHIONABLE WIFE: 127**

ings, when we are taken in by such Adulation! ---- And yet I question whether I should have been more delighted, if Mrs. *Astell* herself had said as much to me, — as she would not have said it with the simplicity with which it was uttered by Miss *Farnby*. However, I only admire *Juliet*, I doat on Mrs. *Astell*; and, though I think less frequently of her, whenever I do think of her, I feel her absence.

I am, my dear Friend,

Yours as sincerely as ever,

E. B.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mrs. ASTELL to Miss HALTS.

Bath.

I WAS in hopes that change of place would have made a change in my circumstances : I was in hopes, at least, that it would have produced a change in my mind. — How sincerely do I wish, that I could bring myself to be contented with my situation, since I cannot expect to see it altered, agreeably to my desires.

Mr. *Astell* is, I am afraid, losing greater sums than he can well pay, and yet appears to be as eager in pursuit of other pleasures.

Here



Here is a Lord *George H—*; he takes a great deal more notice of me, than is agreeable to myself, or to Mr. *Astell*, who, though he seemed desirous of leaving me continually alone with Mr. *Byron*, is quite angry when Lord *George* speaks to me. I cannot help his speaking to me sometimes, as we both happen to lodge in the same house; and he is really a Man one cannot easily get rid of; though you may believe me, my Dear, when I tell you, that I give him no sort of encouragement. He is exceedingly troublesome. I have desired Mr. *Astell* to remove to another house, but I cannot prevail on him to comply with my request. He has taken a fancy to one of the Maids of the house, a very pretty Girl, and she does not, really, look as if she would suffer any Man to

take improper liberties with her. Miss *Burrell*, who is, I think, altered much for the better, tells me, that she is a very good Girl, and wishes me to talk a little with her, in order to keep her and Mr. *Astell* from making themselves ridiculous.

I replied, that I did not imagine Mr. *Astell* troubled himself particularly about *Peggy*, (that is the Girl's name,) as I have been desirous to hinder his being suspected of any such designs. *Kitty*, in return, laughed at me. — I know him better, said she, than that comes to, and so do you, though you pretend to be so ignorant; and I am sure the Girl would mind what you said to her, if you would talk to her, for she is only thoughtless; and indeed, Mrs. *Astell*, continued she, I have suffered  
so

so much myself, for want of a little reflection, that I know how it is.

What you have said may be very true, answered I, but I do not chuse to interfere in Mr. *Astell's* Pleasures.

No! What, not to save a poor innocent Girl from Ruin? — Surely, Mrs. *Astell*, you carry your submission to your Husband a great way, indeed!

In short, my Dear, she talked to me so much, and told me so often, that if any mischief happened I should actually have the Girl's Ruin to answer for, that I began, at length, to think, there would be no harm in my giving Mrs. *Peggy* a little Advice, relating to her Conduct with the Men.

in general. She seemed to receive my Advice with great Modesty and Gratitude; but Mr. *Astell*, having since heard of it, is so very angry with me for troubling my head — as he justly enough calls it, I think, at present — about what I have no business with, that I am ashamed to appear; — and from what *Kitty* lets out, who teazes me excessively about Lord *George*, I begin to think they are all in a combination against me. She has twice brought Lord *George* into my chamber; the last time he came in before I was up; and had he not behaved with more decency than I had reason to expect from him, I know not what would have become of me. He now pretends to be only my Friend, and has offered to protect me against Mr. *Astell*, without  
appear-



*appearing*, and without asking for any thing in return for his assistance but my Friendship, which, he assures me, I may very innocently permit him to enjoy. To convince me of his sincerity, he has desired me to be upon my guard against *Kitty Burrell*, assuring me, that she would not only deliver up her own Person, but sacrifice her dearest Friend for a handsome consideration. — In short, Madam, added he, Miss *Burrell* is a Girl, who will stick at nothing for Money.

Thus you see, my Dear, how very disagreeably I am situated: I am, indeed, in a very embarrassing situation, and know not how to extricate myself out of it. My *real* Friends are all at a distance from me. — Yet what Friends ought

ought a married Woman to have but  
her Husband's

### IN CONTINUATION.

I have just heard that Mr. *Byron* is gone to *Paris*, and that he has taken Miss *Fanny* with him, at the request of Mrs. *Oswald*; a request, however, which was exceedingly agreeable to him, I am told: and I also hear that she is in a fair way of being, with the approbation of her Family, Mrs. *Byron*—Oh! *Marianne*! How weary am I of every thing in this world.

Mr. *Astell* is just brought home senseless from Play: I know not what he has lost, and he is incapable of telling me. The person who saw him safe home, informs me, that after his Companions had left him,  
he:

**The UNFASHIONABLE WIFE. 135**

he drank a large quantity of Usquebaugh, and that he belleyed he had been drinking pretty freely before. I must lay down my pen to attend him.

**Adieu.**

**LET-**

*From the Same to the Same.*

**M**R. *Ashall* recovered his senses, at length, sufficiently to tell me, that he had lost so considerable a sum, that he could never think of repairing it.

I desired him to compose himself—  
We will live with more economy, said I, for the future, and by so doing, endeavour to make up your loss.

His answer was, Do you want to curtail my pleasures? Have I too many, that you need grudge me the few enjoyments I am capable of tasting?

I made



I made him no reply. He wanted rest, I thought, and I was in hopes, that quiet would restore his health.

I sat up with him all night, but he seemed rather offended than pleased with my attendance on him. The Physicians tell me, that he is in a high fever, and speak very doubtfully of his recovery. I have wrote to my Uncle and Brother, to beg them to come and see him; but as he has not been upon very good terms with them since his Father's death, I do not know whether they will accept of my invitation. I can do no more; I shut myself up from the sight of every body. Lord George is perpetually sending enquiries after my health, and his enquiries would have been attended with presents, had I not positively declared

clared that I could, on no account, receive them.

*Kitty Burrell*, who sees Lord *George* frequently, I believe, looks in upon me now and then, but she only laughs at my distress. She tells me, that it is impossible for me to grieve for Mr. *Astell*; and that I only sigh and weep because *Byron* is gone to *Paris* with Miss *Farnby*. I confess this not only hurts me at present, but alarms me, I am afraid of her writing about any thing of this nature to her Brother, who is now in *France*, and who may expose me to Mr. *Byron*.

Indeed, my dear *Marianne*, I was never so unhappy in my life. Deprived also of my dearest, my only Friend, I wear away my hours in melancholy and discontent.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oswald has solicited my correspondence, and I have wrote once to her, but I have not spirits enough to make it, in any degree, entertaining. It is tiresome to talk of nothing but ourselves, and our afflictions.

Adieu.

LET-





news that he did not seem to know to what I was referring. When I told him of the letter that I had written to the Commission, he said that he could not have the least knowledge of it. He said that he had only been told by the Commission that I had written a letter. He said that he had only been told by the Commission that I had written a letter. He said that he had only been told by the Commission that I had written a letter.

The cafe is altered now, replied he, and the very thing I wish to begin in meeting with a generous Frenchman.

A Woman, Harry, who gives her husband a damnably noisy and disagreeable time, and who, although her husband is a good fellow, and would not hurt her for anything, and cannot do much to her, would you not have married her, Sir, if you had known her? She would have spoiled all my life, and I should have been a second-rate fellow after the second and third time. I should have been a third-rate fellow on

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Perhaps I might, answered he, but I am now glad that I did not. — She cannot have the least Tenderneſs for the Man whom ſhe has often reſuſed.

She has too much Delicacy, replied I, to let her Tenderneſs appear before Marriage, but ſhe will, I dare ſay, diſcover no want of Affection for you afterwards. —

It may be ſo, ſaid he; we think differently ---- I have given up all thoughts of her.

What can have ſo ſoon made ſo great a change in your ſentiments? — If you once loved her, ſurely her preſent ſituation cannot have leſſened her Merit. — She is now, too, rather an Object of Compaſſion, and Compaſſion is, not very diſtantly, related to Love.

It

It does not signify talking, *Harry*; I shall never think any more of Mrs. *Oswald*.

You will not then be jealous, if I try my fortune with her?

No—upon honour; but I shall be most exceedingly surprized — Why, you must be absolutely raving to think of marrying her at this time, when she is on the point of losing her fortune, especially, as you never thought of her before.

How are you sure of that? replied I, smiling—If you have no further designs that way, I am satisfied.

Not I, upon my soul, cried he, laughing, though he seriously declared he was sorry to see me such a fool.

And

And now, *Jack*, my scheme is to go to this dear, amiable creature, whom I have long loved, (and from whom I carefully concealed my secret feelings in her favour, till she forced them from me) to offer to assist her with what little I have besides my pay, and to share it with her, if she will accept of *that* and *me*. I could not bear the thoughts of offering myself to her while her fortune was superior to mine, lest she should imagine I had a design upon her money — I could not bring myself to act in so scandalous a manner — But as things are differently situated, she may now want a Friend: I will prove myself a Friend to the very utmost of my power. How earnestly do I wish for a larger sum, that I may be still more serviceable to her! — But while I am writing, Time flies — that Time which ought — as I have

hA A made



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made you acquainted with my intentions---to be dedicated to *her* alone.

I am,

**My dear Brother,**

**Yours most fraternally,**

**GEORGE FRAMPTON.**

**VOL. II.**

**H**

**LET-**

## L E T T E R L I.

*Miss Hales to Mrs. Oswald.*

I HAVE just now, my dear Madam, received the news of Mr. *Astell's* death.

Our dear Mrs. *Astell* severely laments her being deprived of all her Friends at a time when she stands most in need of their society and assistance. I am extremely concerned that it is not in my power to be with her as long as I wish to be---I shall not be able to stay with her longer than a week at *Astell Park*, to which place she went immediately on Mr. *Astell's* death.

She asked Miss *Burrell*, though she had so little encouraged her to confer any further civilities, and though she  
is

is a very improper person to be with her, to accompany her, (agreeably to Mr. *Astell's* first invitation) to stay with her till Mr. *Burrell's* return to *England*. While you were with *that* Lady, she conducted herself with much greater prudence than she has since done---How kind would it be in you, dear Mrs. *Oswald*, and what pleasure would it give our amiable Friend, as well as me, to make a visit to the Park, at least before I leave it? May I hope to receive a favourable answer from you to this request? Your compliance with it will give me very great pleasure.

I am, dear Madam,

Your sincere Friend and  
very humble Servant,

M. HALES.

H 2

P. S.

P. S. If we cannot have the pleasure of meeting, I hope too hear from you—Pray say as much as you please of Col. *Frampton*. I believe him to be most deserving of your good opinion. I shall give you a convincing proof that I think as highly of Mr. *Ranib/pb* in less than a fortnight; but I have not leisure, at present, to enter into particulars.

LET-



## L E T T E R LII

*Mrs. OSWALD to Mrs. ASTELL.*

I RECEIVED your pressing invitation, my Dear, at the same time that I heard of the death of your Tyrant. Do not frown now, Mrs. *Astell*, and look severe---You cannot feel, you ought not to affect any sorrow, for a Man who treated you with so much neglect---with such brutality.

I have, at this moment, before me, a very obliging Letter from Miss *Hales*: She wishes me to be with you, but you seem not to know---neither she nor you---that I have met with---what the World calls---the most dreadful of misfortunes, by

H 3

being

being deprived of a fortune which I could not enjoy, and by being reduced almost to a level with the Man, who, alone, can make me happy. ---But to come to the point. Col. *Frampton* having heard that Mrs. *Oswald's* Brother, supposed to be long since dead, was alive, and just arrived from the *East Indies*, came immediately to see me.

I have heard a piece of news, Madam, which will, I am afraid, prove very disagreeable to you, but I am not sorry to say, that it is not unwelcome to *me*, as it gives me an opportunity to offer you every service in my power.

I smiled --- (I could not help smiling, though I acted, by so doing, in opposition to my plan) and replied --- We compliment our Friends  
oddly,

oddly, methinks, when we tell them we are glad to hear of their distresses.

Very absurdly, indeed, replied he, if we cannot remove them; and I hope to be happy enough to alleviate *yours*, at least, if I cannot accomplish the total removal of them, if you will do me the honour you once seemed willing to bestow on me, if you will give me a legal right to be your Protector.

Why really, *Frampton*, answered I, quite charmed with his spirit, as you have refused *me*, I think I can do no less than return the compliment, by refusing *you*.

You are changed, then, since the happy time when you would have suffered me to pretend to you?

H 4

No,

No, answered I, I am only changed in my circumstances, and cannot, therefore, consent to burden the Man I esteem with an indigent Wife.

You can never be destitute of Merit, Madam, said he; you are, in fact, infinitely more valuable than you ever was, by your uncommon greatness of mind: But if that very greatness of mind is the only cause of my infelicity, you must give me leave to say, that I wish you was not distinguished by it.

As I am not likely to be distinguished from my sex by any thing else, replied I, smiling, you would pay me a poor compliment, by taking it away from me, and, therefore, you must excuse me, Sir.

I can-



I cannot, indeed, answered he — I shall, I hope, thoroughly convince you, before I leave you, that every Virtue, carried to excess, becomes a Vice. This Generosity of your's, if you do not take care, may degenerate into a shabby Selfishness. — You may, perhaps, fancy, that you can live more at your ease with your little Income by yourself, than by joining it to *my* small one; but you are mistaken, Madam; you do not know what an Oeconomist I am. I have long despised the World, at least the worthless part of it, who would despise me for not being possessed of Riches. I have but one Want, Madam — Could I call *you* mine, I should enjoy every thing most desirable; and, I flatter myself, that I still have it in my power, to make you some reparation for the disappointment you

have met with, as my second Brother, *Jack*, has generously given up an Estate of three hundred a year, left him by my Grandfather, to me, on your consenting to honour me with your Hand.

I started, at first, on hearing of this generous Donation, and began to consider, whether I should not love *Jack Frampton* almost as well as *Harry*; but as I had no time to lose, I replied, Well, Sir, since you honestly and sincerely believe that I shall be every thing to you, by giving you my Hand, I consent to be your's, provided you take me now, while I am in the humour; for as I am a Woman, it is highly probable that I may change my mind. You look surprized; Colonel *Frampton*, added 'I, (seeing him stare at me,) I confess, what I have said is enough to draw upon.

upon me the imputation of Indelicacy, but I am so circumstanced, as to be obliged to lie under that imputation at present; it depends upon *you*, therefore, to determine, whether you will accept of me upon these terms.

Accept of you, Madam, cried he! — Is it possible for me to hesitate a moment? — He clasped me in his arms, and would seal the Contract upon my Lips. My spirits were soon in great agitation, and I could scarce find strength to disengage myself from him. Prudence dictated that I should leave him. I sprang from him, and shut myself up in an adjacent parlour. Away he went when he found I would have it so.

I felt my face glow — I was disconcerted beyond expression — I could not suffer matters to be hurried thus;

and yet I trembled at the bare idea of losing him.—Stay, *Frampton*, said I, stay a moment—I am not the Woman you suppose me to be.

How! Madam, cried he—I am very sorry to hear you say so, for I think you the most amiable Creature—

Aye, but your imagination leads you into an error: Stay, and tell me—Can you be happy with me if you should be mistaken in me? Will you be contented with me upon my own terms? You said just now that you could not hesitate.

I cannot hesitate; only tell me what I must do.

Have patience, said I; you must wait a little longer for me, that's all.---Yet I must have your Word and Honour, *Frampton*.---I believe  
that



that your Honour is dearer to you than your life.

I hope it is, Madam.

Well, then --- You must swear that you will marry me, whenever I call upon you.

Do you doubt my inclination for you, replied he, smiling, by obliging me to make a solemn promise to do what is so very agreeable to me?

Well, but you was not always in this humour, said I; there was a time when I was forced to court you, and could not prevail on you neither to oblige me.

My behaviour at that time did not, believe me, arise from want of inclination, but from a fear of appearing to desire your Fortune more than

than your Person. Now, as your Fortune is lessened, I cannot be suspected of having any mercenary views.

That's true, answered I, but I was contented with you before. — If any sudden turn of Fortune should happen in my favour, you would, perhaps, refuse me again.

Dear Mrs. *Oswald*, how you torture my heart, by reminding me of that refusal! It almost bereaved me of my Reason, at the time when I thought myself in Honour bound to make it; and, indeed, it is rather cruel to mention it so often.

I only mention it, replied I, to prevent your being guilty of the same error again; and I expect you to make the promise I exact from you: For,  
since

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since you have generously offered to marry me; insisted, indeed, upon marrying me, though I have nothing to bestow; you have very clearly shewed yourself perfectly disinterested, and may now accept of me if I had millions to offer you.

He began, by this time, I believe, to guess what I was about; and, with a half smile, said, I fancy I understand you, Madam — Be assured, that if I *did* refuse you, I refused you because I knew you to be so very valuable, that I never could be deserving of you. --- Take my Hand, my Heart, my solemn Promise to be yours, and only yours, for ever, either in the most distressful, or the most affluent situation.

Now you are my excellent *Framp-*  
*ton*, said I, giving him my hand;  
and

and now I am not afraid to tell you, that I have deceived you for the first and last time. I have met with no change in my Fortune, but I prevailed on a Friend to spread such a report in *your* hearing, to try if that would not move you: It has had the wished-for effect; and, if you can pardon the deceitful proceeding, I shall be most happy.

Generous Woman! cried he; no words can express my sense of the obligations you have laid me under. --- Doubly are my sincerest acknowledgments due to you, for the possession of your valuable, your inestimable Heart.

What do you say to my Colonel *now*, my dear Mrs. *Astell*? But to force you to love him, whether you will or no, I have made him promise  
to



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to spare me, for a week, at *Astell Park*. I must tell you also, that I insisted upon his not accepting of his Brother's offered Estate, mine being very sufficient for us both.

And now, my Dear, I am coming to you; and hope, as I am in such good spirits, that I shall contribute a little to the restoration of yours.

Yours, ever sincerely,

H. O.

L E T.

## LETTER LIII.

*Mrs. RANDOLPH to Mrs. ASTELL.*

**I** RETURN you my sincere thanks, my dear Friend, for your congratulations, and hope, at a decent time, to repay them with interest; for, certainly, a heart which has long struggled between Duty and Love, must taste a much higher degree of Joy, in seeing the latter crowned with all the success it deserves, than what such tranquil spirits as mine experience. I am not, perhaps, so acutely sensible of Pleasure or Pain, as those who have suffered considerably from the latter, without having, indeed, any encouragement to expect the former.

You

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You will, I doubt not, soon hear from *Byron* ---- if you have not already heard from him ---- and that you will, ere long, see him in *England*. Mr. *Randolph* and I join in wishing you all happiness. --- Do not, my sweet Friend, let a false Delicacy render you affectedly indifferent to the Man who has, by his respectful, as well as his tender behaviour, discovered how well he deserves your heart. — In consideration of that behaviour, you may, with great propriety, dispense with those forms which might be expected, were you addressed by any other Man. Forgive me, my dear *Maria*, for venturing to prescribe so freely to you. I really advise no more than what I would myself do, were I in your situation. --- I think I see very flattering prospects,

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pects, by endeavouring to keep the heart which I have gained, and I naturally wish, that my dearest Friend may soon enjoy as much felicity.

I am,

My dear *Maria's* ever sincere,

Ever affectionate,

M. RANDOLPH.

LET.



## LETTER LIV.

*Mrs. OSWALD to Mrs. RANDOLPH.*

OUR dear Mrs. *Astell* has received your Letter. She was very much pleased with it, but she has declared, over and over, that she has not spirits to write an answer to it.

By mentioning Mr. *Byron* in the manner you did, you touched upon a tender point. Our poor Friend has sighed ever since, as not even a single line has appeared from him, at *Astell Park*. I cannot think what the Man is about. I will positively write, and ask him. Perhaps, indeed, he may be as delicate as she is, and so, between them both, they will pine away their lives in discontent, instead of being happy, as they might be. I  
really

really think that *she*, who has been so very ill used by her Husband, may receive the addresses of a Lover a great deal sooner than the Woman who had married more to her satisfaction. I believe, indeed, that Mrs. *Astell* will not be permitted to keep up to the strictness of a tedious widowhood. Her Uncle has recommended a very amiable and accomplished Man to her, (though it is full early, in my opinion, for such a proceeding,) but she will not hear of him. He has hitherto only spoke through his Friend; he will soon, however, I fancy, make his appearance, under the sanction of this same Uncle, who is a very busy man; rather impertinently so. — She has been married once, and most unhappily, to be sure, in compliance with *his* advice; and, certainly, she ought to follow her own inclination

*now:*

*now:* And I really imagine that she would follow it, if *Byron* did but solicit her earnestly. Yet, as we hear not a syllable of him—I think he must have been acquainted with *Astell's* death—I sometimes fancy he is seriously attached to *Juliet Farnby*.—Mrs. *Astell* seems to be quite ready to give credit to such an attachment.

On my mentioning, t'other day, *Byron's* attachment to herself, which was visible to every body, though he so prudently kept his passion under, that it could not possibly give offence—Aye, replied she, with a sigh, which she strove to suppress, I once thought I was tenderly esteemed by him, but now I am sure I am mistaken—

She

She coloured excessively when she had spoken those few words, and seemed desirous of recalling them.

I told her, that she had no reason to be ashamed of what she had said, as every body's sentiments, at that time, corresponded with her's. I am not willing to flatter you with false hopes, my Dear, but I am strongly inclined to believe that we shall soon hear of him.

She shook her head—She abandons herself to Despair.—Her despondence, however, does honour to her present situation, as it occasions the appearance of a very decent, and not unbecoming sorrow: For though every body must know, that she cannot sincerely grieve for such a Man as *Astell*, yet she would, by appearing totally unconcerned, discover a heart desti-



destitute of feeling. *Astell*, having hastened his death, by the distresses which he brought upon himself, and by shewing no remorse for his past ill conduct, or belief in a future state, became, before he died, an object of Horror and Compassion; and therefore his last moments could not but make a strong impression on the mind of a Woman of *Maria's* Delicacy; yet, I declare, I think her sufferings have made her look a thousand times handsomer than ever she was. — I have a vast inclination to tell *Byron* so.

*Frampton*, whom she allows to visit here, desires me to be silent upon *that* head. — He tells me, that, as he has a violent propensity to be jealous, my corresponding with such a formidable fellow as *Byron*, will alarm

him — But *I tell him*, that he is too well assured of his power over my heart, to be in the slightest tremor about it. He and I both rejoice in your, and in Mrs. *Randolph's* happiness. Could I but see our dear *Maria* in as fair a way to be rewarded for all her disquietudes, what pleasure should I feel!

I am,

My dear Mrs. *Randolph*,

Your ever sincere Friend,

H. OSWALD.

LET-

## LETTER LV.

*Mrs. ASTELL to Mrs. RANDOLPH.*

OUR amiable and lively *Henrietta* will insist upon my giving you an account of a visit which I have just had from Lord *Duncan*, whom my Uncle would oblige me to see, in opposition to all the rules of Decency: She herself, indeed, was the chief cause of my agreeing to it; for when my Uncle pressed me hard for my consent, and received my positive refusal, *she* came slyly behind me, tapped me on the shoulder, and said, softly, Would you be denied to *Byron*, now, if he should come to see you?

I felt my face glow; my heart throbbed; and I was all in a flutter.

My Uncle took advantage of my confusion, and left me.—I see, said he, that you are not unwilling to receive my Lord, only you don't think proper to say so, and therefore I look upon your silence as consent.

On the conclusion of that speech I stopped him, hastening out of the room, and begged him to consider, that I had suffered a great deal during the last three or four years; adding, that I hoped I might now be permitted to live as I pleased.

All Men, Child, replied he, are not like *Astell*. Lord *Duncan* is one of the most agreeable Men you have ever seen. His Person, Character, and Disposition, will entirely suit you.

I will



I will have you see him directly. When once you are acquainted with him, you may take your own time, but I insist upon your not refusing him; if you do, you may never meet with such another Man.

I complained to my Uncle of this indecent precipitation, but he paid no regard to me. I complained to Mrs. *Oswald* of the disagreeableness of my situation: I must either displease my Uncle, said I, or render myself miserable.

She only laughed at me. On a sudden, my Lord came. I told Mrs. *Oswald* I was not able to receive him, and intreated her to go down to the Parlour for me.

She laughed ready to drop, as she called it, at my strange request, and

asked me, what Mr. *Monkton* would think of us both? However, *Maria*, continued she, I will own, that a Woman appears in a very ridiculous point of view, when she is exhibited to a professed Lover in form, in order to receive his first Addresses.

She then laughed again, and in so loud a key, that I was afraid my Lord would hear her, and impute the mirth to *me*.—I went down, therefore, by myself—Mrs. *Oswald* was, indeed, become so giddy, that I did not know what to do with her.

When I came into the Parlour I was struck with my Lord's Appearance; not with a sudden Inclination for him, but with the Dignity of his Air, and the uncommon Gracefulness of his Manner. As soon as I appeared, he threw an additional Soft-  
ness

ness into his whole Carriage, which made him very insinuating. He at once informed me, that neither the Charms of my Person, nor the Sweetness of my Disposition, had induced him to make such early Addresses to me, but that he had been prompted to appear in the Character of a Lover, having been thoroughly convinced, that I had made the best of Wives to the worst of Husbands.— Had you loved Mr. *Astell*, Madam, continued he—do not be either surprized or offended at my freedom --- had you loved him---I am sure you never *could* love him---even then your Conduct, after so much ill treatment, would have been exemplary.

I am sorry, my Lord, replied I, (willing to put a stop to any farther mention of poor Mr. *Astell*.) that

you should suppose I would marry any Man whom I could not love.

I do not mean to throw the slightest reflection on you, my dear Madam, said he; be pleased to hear me explain myself. A young Lady of your mild disposition and excellent temper, and unconnected with Ladies of a very different turn, might chuse to take the advice of your Relations in a point of so much consequence: You might, from a Modesty and Delicacy peculiar to yourself, refer the choice of the Gentleman to *them*, supposing them, from a larger Acquaintance with the World, and the Characters of Men, to be no incompetent Judges of what might constitute your Happiness.

I did, my Lord, answered I, but yet I should have thought myself blame-



blameable for implicitly following the advice of my Friends, if I had not approved also of what they believed to be for my advantage.

Well, Madam, replied my Lord, smiling, I will allow what you say to be just. I am assured it is the truth; but then, when Mr. *Astell*, who altered his conduct so much, you must allow, after marriage, and appeared insensible of the felicity he might have enjoyed in possessing so amiable a Woman, how infinitely more amiable were you, by your affectionate behaviour to him, by your discreet behaviour to the world! By that behaviour you shewed, that not even the neglect and ill-treatment of an unworthy Husband, could tempt you to a single deviation from that propriety of carriage, which renders a Lady so de-

sirable for a Wife: — Such a Wife, therefore, not being commonly met with, especially among Women of Family, though they, from their situation in life, ought to be the very people to set examples, is doubly to be valued whenever she is found. It was in consequence of the excellent character given me of *you*, Madam, that I ventured, thus early, to interest Mr. *Monkton* in my favour, and to intreat him to solicit for me the happiness of being introduced to you, as I was well assured, that so lovely, so deserving a Woman, must be eagerly sought after by every Man who has the least idea of her uncommon merit. I have nothing further to say, Madam, than to intreat your permission to enjoy the honour and pleasure of your acquaintance, and to have an opportunity to endeavour to render myself agreeable to

to you. Give me leave to assure you, at the same time, that if I am happy enough to succeed, if I am happy enough to gain your favour, I shall, with regard to jointures, pin-money, jewels, and every other article, act entirely according to your inclination; you shall dispose of me, you shall dispose of my fortune, in the manner you please, for I am thoroughly convinced that your value is inestimable. Permit me also, Madam, to leave you entirely Mistress of your time, that you may be laid under no disagreeable restraints whatever, but live in the style you most like. I am satisfied that I shall be happy, when I see *you* pleased.

I think I never heard a handsomer address, but yet my heart said nothing. I made his Lordship a compliment upon the honour he had done me;

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assuring

assuring him, however, at the same time, that I could not accept of it. He renewed his request for a permission to visit me, but I begged to be excused, as I was persuaded that his merit, considerable as it was, would not have the desired effect. — If you are really sincere, my Lord, continued I, if you really like me as much as you say you do, a further acquaintance with me will only create further disappointments.

I could not, even by this frank way of proceeding, get rid of him. He then requested the favour and happiness of my Friendship, and staid till Mrs. *Oswald* came down, who spitefully remained above so long, that I was ready to quarrel with her. He made so good a use of his time with her, that he gained her quite over to his



his party. When he was gone, she read me such a lecture in his behalf, that I was forced to leave her in the middle of it.

I could wish that my only favourite Companion, as I am deprived of *your* company, was more of my own way of thinking on such important points, because her arguments distress me. — My spirits are not strong enough to bear her opposition to my sentiments! How can she, who knows my heart so well, think I can ever be brought to give my hand away a second time, but to a person very much esteemed by me indeed? That no such person exists—for me, at present, I firmly believe.

IN CONTINUATION.

I have just received a Note from Miss *Burrell*, who, instead of going home,

home, chose to stay with Lady *Free-love*, till her Brother's return, rather than with me. She tells me, that a Marriage is concluded between Mr. *Byron* and Miss *Farnby*. I sincerely wish Mr. *Byron* all the happiness he deserves. — Mrs. *Oswald* lifts up her hands and eyes. She talks of leaving me soon. Such is the very ineligible situation, at present, of,

My dear *Marianne*,

Your ever affectionate Friend,

M. ASTELL.

L E T-

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L E T T E R LVI.

*From the Same to the Same.*

I AM quite out of breath—I can scarce hold my pen. Mr. *Byron* has been to see me—He has been here,—at *Astell-Park*; yet so altered, so changed—he was totally unlike the *Byron* whom I long thought so amiable—Yet he was still handsome and elegant to a very great degree; but so grave, so dejected, let me rather say.

I was so astonished, indeed, to see him so unexpectedly, that I looked frightened out of my senses. I felt the alteration in my countenance strongly,

strongly, and I was ready to faint, from the violent oppression of my spirits.

His visit was short and respectful: But it was not the visit I thought I should have received from Mr. *Byron*: It was --- But what reason had I to expect any thing particular from him? --- And yet, was he not very particular in his carriage to me during the life of Mr. *Astell*, at a time when he ought not to have been so? --- And now --- Oh! *Marianne* --- But I forget --- He is going to be married to Miss *Farnby*; it was that which occasioned his unusual reserve to me, his coldness, which almost froze me to death. --- He would not, however, tell me any thing of the affair. --- Perhaps, seeing how much I was affected by his cold



cold behaviour, he was afraid of distressing me quite, by the communication of such a piece of intelligence, which he might suppose I had not heard. He was always good tempered: By marrying Miss *Farnby*, he will not give the least proof of his ill humour. But I will think of him no more --- I will talk of him no more --- He is nothing to *me*. --- Yet I *must* tell you, my dear *Marianne*, that he looked pale and thin:---He informed me, that he had been confined to his bed with a fever a whole month, and that he was not able in two months to leave the house, or even to take the air; adding, that no Man had been more tenderly nursed, and that he really believed he owed his life to Miss *Farnby's* family.

How

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How does that young Lady do, Sir? said I, colouring like a Fool.

She is very well, replied he,--- there he stopped. He opened his mouth soon afterwards, to say something, but shut it again without uttering a syllable. After having dropped a few trifling expressions, he took his leave with a respectful bow.

You cannot think how this visit has disconcerted me. Mrs. Oswald was not here, she was gone upon a little party with Col. Frampton. I told her what had passed as soon as she returned.

If he is either married to, or going to be married to Juliet Farnby, said she, he has behaved very foolishly, I think, by coming to Astell-Park.

I was

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I was sorry she made this remark --- Why is Mr. *Byron* to be blamed for marrying the Woman he likes? He is, certainly, free to chuse. But Mrs. *Oswald* is grown very whimsical, and I believe she thinks me very capricious.

IN CONTINUATION.

I have just been told, that Mr. *Byron* was here again before Mrs. *Oswald* came home, and asked to speak with her. Is not this very odd? He mentioned not a word, *Fletcher* says, about *me*: He had something to communicate from Miss *Farnby*, or her Family; but he might have trusted *me* with it--- I should have been very faithful and exact. †- What a difference in every  
part

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part of his Behaviour?---I am, this moment, seized with a violent pain in my head. I must lay down my pen.

Adieu.

LET-



## L E T T E R LVII.

Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.

AFTER a tedious illness, the foundation of which was my too close attendance on Lord *Somerſet*, of whom I caught the Fever, I recovered only to hear news more diſquieting to me than all the pains I had endured:---I heard that *Aſtell* was dead, and that Mrs. *Aſtell* was already engaged to Lord *Duncan*.

But why ſhould I be ſurprized, or ſhocked at this intelligence? Did ſhe not tell me, at the very moment ſhe was undeſignedly drawn in to diſcover ſome tenderneſs for me, — did ſhe not, at that moment, tell me,  
that,

that, were she at liberty, she would never indulge the sentiments she felt in my favour, and that her character should be as un sullied as her person? --- Good God! What hurt could she have done her character, by encouraging an inclination which was as pure as it was tender? After having behaved in the most irreproachable manner during the life of her Tyrant, who could have justly censured her, for rewarding the faithful and respectful passion of the Man, who never once attempted to take advantage of the information, which she inadvertently gave him, and which was so exquisitely pleasing to a heart that had long sighed for *her* alone? --- Unfortunately, I was absent from her at the very time when she was most likely to be softened in my favour. -- My presence might, at least, have

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have prevented her from forming any new connections, till I had an opportunity to endeavour to prevail on her to listen to me---But now---crushed are my fondest hopes.---That most unlucky fever, by which I was detained so long at *Montpelier*, gave Lord *Duncan* time, with her Uncle's assistance, to engage her affections before I could return to *England*.---Yet if she had really loved me, would she have consented?---Could she, possibly, have consented, ere she had put it in my power to try my interest with her?---No---she never loved me---I was mistaken.---She was, herself, mistaken, when she said all those fond things to me---She most certainly meant them not: She was frightened, and said she knew not what.

I have

I have written to Mrs. *Oswald*, but I have not sent my Letter — To what purpose should I send it? — She is lost to me, and —

## IN CONTINUATION.

Interrupted by a letter from Mrs. *Oswald*.

It has thrown me into transports ; yet her beginning is a strange one. She accuses me of having been engaged to *Juliet Farnby*. That *Juliet Farnby*, and her Family, might have been pleased with such an engagement, I am ready enough to imagine ; but why Mrs. *Oswald*, who cannot but be acquainted with my attachment to Mrs. *Astell*, should think me of so volatile a disposition, I cannot conceive.

*Juliet*



*Juliet* nursed me, undoubtedly, with great tenderness, during my illness, and appeared to love me, but it was with the innocent affection of a Sister; and my behaviour to her, in return, was that of an affectionate Brother.

Mrs. *Oswald*, by telling me that Mrs. *Astell* has *not* consented to receive Lord *Duncan's* addresses, inspires me with fresh hopes. Yet I know not how to get at her. --- My first reception, on my return to *England*, was very disheartening. There was a reserve, a coldness in her carriage, which chilled me. --- She was, all the time, too embarrassed, and disconcerted beyond expression. --- I attributed, indeed, all her confusion, to the consciousness of a new attach-

ment --- Perhaps it was occasioned by the revival of former sensations. --- I will endeavour to see her, if possible, at some other house, rather than her own, in order to watch her behaviour more narrowly, and to read my Fate in her charming Eyes. She goes abroad but seldom; I will, however, try to meet her at Sir *Harry Granger's* --- She visited his Sister sometimes --- I am known to him, and can introduce myself without being suspected.

You shall hear how I proceed before you see me. I cannot rest till I am acquainted with this amiable Woman's real sentiments, which Mrs. *Oswald* has artfully concealed. I thank her for what she has *discovered*, but I could quarrel with  
her,

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her, heartily, for what she has *sup-*  
*pressed.*

I am, my dear *Gray*,

Your much pleased, much

perplexed, sincere Friend,

and humble Servant,

E. B.

K 2

LET-

## L E T T E R LVIII.

*From the Same to the Same.*

**M**Y patience was quite exhausted before Mrs. *Astell* went to *Granger's*; I had a person in waiting to give me intelligence about her motions.

Yesterday I dined with Sir *Harry*; Mrs. *Astell* made her appearance in the afternoon.

She was lovely, though unadorned; lovely, because she was without Ornaments; her sable Dress was a fine foil to the delicate Paleness of her Complexion: I never saw her look handsomer. A glowing Blush crimsoned her fair Cheek on my approaching her---



her — She was, at that moment, inexpressibly beautiful.

When I took hold of her hand, she hastily withdrew it; and put on a reserve, which stripped her, at once, of half her Graces.

I began, at last, to imagine, that she, as well as Mrs. *Oswald*, had heard of my being engaged to *Juliet Farnby*. I might well, indeed, suppose her to have heard of it, from the intimacy subsisting between them. She could not be ignorant of the ridiculous report raised, very unjustly, at my expence. However, I determined to destroy the mischief it had done, --- if it *bad* done any.

As soon as I could find a proper opening, I entered into a conversation, which naturally led to the repre-

hension of those impertinent and malicious Busy - bodies, who spread scandalous stories, very prejudicial to the persons concerned in them. At last I introduced the impudent falsehood, circulated about *me* and Miss *Farnby*; adding, that I thought it not only disadvantageous to *me*, but detrimental to the young Lady, as she might, perhaps, lose a valuable Lover, by the idle tittle - tattle on her account, which could only have been occasioned by Mrs. *Oswald's* having desired me to conduct her to her Family at *Paris*, as I happened to be going thither; declaring, at the same time, that I never had entertained a single thought of such a connection. The young Lady in question, concluded I, is certainly amiable, but there is, in my opinion, much too great a disproportion in our ages.

I looked

I looked earnestly at Mrs. *Astelt* when I spoke the last few words, and perceived an instantaneous change in her countenance for the better. She blushed, indeed, at my observing her closely, but her features had a quite new appearance. On her first coming into the room, a bashful kind of concern seemed to have taken possession of her; she hardly lifted up her eyes; they now absolutely sparkled with Joy; all Sorrow was banished, and smiling Pleasure animated her whole Face.

Encouraged by the alteration I had occasioned, I ventured to approach her soon afterwards.

She received me with a sort of a corrected satisfaction, that a too happy appearance might not render her Delicacy suspected, which gave me the

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greatest hopes. By degrees I dropped the rest of the company, and attached myself to her alone.

By so doing, I embarrassed her a little at first; but she recovered herself when she saw that I forbore being particular, out of mere pity, to spare her Blushes, though they made her look like an Angel.

A great part of the Company sat down to play: Mrs. *Astell* declined it; and, you may be sure, I followed *her* example.

Those who were not at Cards, walked in the Garden.

Under the pretence of describing some exceeding fine Orange-trees which I had seen at *Montpelier*, I drew the Company to the quarter of Sir *Harry's* Garden,



Garden, in which his Exotics were placed. While they were employed in examining those beautiful plants, I took Mrs. *Astell's* hand, and asked her if she would give me an opportunity to vindicate my conduct more particularly to her, with regard to Miss *Farnby*, whom I had never actually loved, whom I had not even pretended to love?

With a rosy Smile, and with the sweetest Voice in the world, she replied, Mr. *Byron's* Conduct, I dare believe, stands in need of no vindication, neither can he ever want an opportunity to visit those Friends who are most agreeable to him.

The delicate apprehension of having said too much, and of quite discouraging me at the same time, was visible in her downcast eyes:

K 5 and

and I felt *that* apprehension in her trembling hand, which I presumed to carry to my lips—She snatched it away hastily, lest we should be noticed, and walked towards the rest of the company.

How amiable, how bewitching is this modestly reluctant behaviour, to the Man for whom she now, I hope, feels favourable sensations in her gentle bosom ! Her Virtues endear her to me even more than her Beauties ; doubly desirable is she for them both. What a prospect of Happiness ! how flattering ! how intoxicating ! The possession of such a heart as her's, how earnestly is it to be wished for ! — If it proves but as impassioned as my own is, I shall be fixed immoveably her's, to the last moment of my existence. — How trans-

transporting is it to know, that what renders her so compleatly attractive in my eyes, will not only be durable, but hourly improving. Mere personal Beauty is of a perishable nature, and must, necessarily, be destroyed by Time; but the Accomplishments of the Mind, and the Virtues of the Heart, are permanent, and will *charm*, when the Skin has lost its most alluring Tinctures, and the Eye its most animated Lustre.

I had not another opportunity to speak, particularly, to her, but her looks sufficiently assured me, that she had not been displeased with what passed between us. She was even so complaisant as to lengthen her visit, upon my eagerly telling her, with *Granger*---when she made a motion to go---that we could not part with her so soon.

When *Granger* led her to her coach, I followed close, to bid her adieu---She held out her soft, white hand to me before she wished me a good night. Not being, however, in the least disposed to sleep, I sat down to write to you, as soon as I got to my lodging.

I intend to see her, at her own house, to-morrow. I hope I shall then be able to subscribe myself,

Your happy,

as well as

Your sincerely affectionate Friend,

E. B.

LET-



## L E T T E R LIX.

*Mrs. ASTELL to Mrs. RANDOLPH.*

**M**Y dear, dear *Marianne*, what a strange, agreeable flutter of spirits was I thrown into yesterday, at the unexpected sight of Mr. *Byron*, at Sir *Harry Granger's*, after I had given up all hopes of seeing him, as I used to see him.

I cannot tell you why I am so much elated: I cannot tell you what he said, nor what answers I returned: Nor can I inform you what I ought to expect from him. And yet, my dear Mrs. *Randolph*, I am so agitated, that I am incapable of knowing how to conduct myself. Every time I hear the bell at the gate,

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gate, I cry, *Byron* is come. Every Man I see advancing to the House, I take to be a Servant from him, with a Message, or a Letter. Yet why should I expect either to see him, or to hear from him? Circumstanced as we have been, ought I to listen to any proposals from him? And yet, if my refusals should make him unhappy---I should be inexpressibly miserable. But how can I be so vain as to suppose I have such power? I really grow so foolish, that I am quite ashamed of myself---I beg you will burn this nonsense as soon as you have read it.---I know not what to think. I blame *Byron* ---I blame myself; and for what? Merely because he addressed a few compliments to me, and paid me those gallantries which he saw I was weak enough to expect, and which  
he

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he saw, pleased me. Indeed, *Marianne*, I never thought I should have been so silly. How excessively *Byron* must despise me! I ought to be made sensible of my folly, and I am thoroughly sensible of it. I may think myself happy if he does not expose me.

Pity me, my Dear, though I have let myself down so much, and permit me still to subscribe myself,

Your ever affectionate Friend;

MARIA ASTELL.

LET-

## L E T T E R L X.

*Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.*

**W**HAT an unexpected, what an unseasonable interruption have I met with, just on the point of flying to secure the dear Mistress of my Heart for ever!

Having ordered my things to dress, I was preparing to make my appearance with as much elegance as possible.

*John* came up stairs, and told me, that a young Lady was just arrived, in a post-chaise, and desired to see me.

Before I could return an answer, *Juliet Farnby* rushed into my arms. They were open, you will say, to receive



ceive her, or she could not have been in them.—I don't know how it is, but there was something so pitiable in a fine young Creature in distress, and in distress upon my account, that I could not receive her coldly, though I perhaps cursed the occasion which sent her hither, just at this interesting moment.

However, as soon as I had seated her in an elbow-chair, I said to her, gravely, How comes it, Miss *Farnby*, that I have the honour of seeing you so soon in *England* — (no very kind reception, neither, you will say,) — and alone?—Something very particular, surely, has happened, to hasten your departure from *France*.

Dear Mr. *Byron*, replied the weeping Girl, blushing like scarlet, dear Mr. *Byron*, don't be angry — It must come

come out — But I do not know how to tell you — For the love of Heaven, do not think amiss of me — Indeed I am not a bad Girl, though a very unhappy one: Pray, don't blame me; don't be angry.

Good God! — thought I — struck with this preamble, there must be something very much amiss. — I, Madam, angry with you! — I have no right to be angry with you. The excellent Parents, whom you have left, have most reason to be offended with you, for leaving them; though you have, doubtless, left them with their own consent: But, possibly, they are come to *England* also, and ----

Oh, no! replied she, shaking her head — No; they do not even know where I am.

How!

How ! cried I, with an astonished air ; has Miss *Farnby* been so far capable of forgetting herself, as to leave her valuable Father and Mother ; and to fly from them, clandestinely too, without their knowledge ?

Dear Mr. *Byron*, said she, clinging to me, do not think so meanly of me : When you have heard my motive, your anger will be softened, I hope :— Yet how shall I tell you ?

I am not angry with you, Miss *Farnby*, replied I, as I told you before ; I have no right to interfere in your affairs ; but my friendship for Mr. and Mrs. *Farnby*, make me concerned to see their beloved Daughter act in so indiscreet a manner.

It is only, then, your Friendship for my Father and Mother, answered she.

she, looking earnestly at me, with a most dejected air, which makes you concerned : You have no Friendship for me, Mr. *Byron*, none at all. Merciful God ! what will become of me !

Still, *Gray*, I declare I had not the smallest conception of the true state of the case ; nor could I imagine what could have prompted this poor Girl to take so wrong-headed a step.

I then asked her how she could venture to come to *England* without a proper person to take care of her ? And why, since she had committed so unaccountable an action, she had not gone directly to Mrs. *Oswald* ?

Mrs. *Oswald* would have sent me back immediately, said she.

And why are you not willing to go back to such dear and worthy Relations and Friends ?

Because



Because I hope that a dearer, a worthier Friend is here; a Friend whom I esteem and love beyond all the rest upon earth.—Oh, Mr. *Byron*, can you not guess *now*? added she, clapping her hands to her face, which glowed with blushes—But you will not understand me: And yet I do not want to make you unhappy—Yet pray hear me; as I have been capable of saying so much, I can easily say the rest.

I confess, *George*, I was so much astonished when I began to comprehend her meaning, that I could not presently recover myself: I suffered her to go on without any interruption on *my* part.

When I first saw you, Mr. *Byron*, continued she, I thought I had never  
seen

seen so amiable a Man in my life: the sweetness of your disposition, your charming conversation, your kind endeavours to improve me, and the pretty manner in which you corrected my little faults, made me think myself happy whenever I was near you. When we left the *Lodge* to go to Mrs. *Oswald's*, I mourned in secret; but no words can express the joy I felt, when I found I was to go, under your protection, to *Paris*. The intimacy you and Lord and Lady *Somerset* fell into with my Father and Mother, gave me so many opportunities to see you, to hear you, and to admire you — Surely, Mr. *Byron*, there can be no harm in admiring what is worthy of admiration — that — but I cannot tell you every thing: I can only tell you, that when you fell sick, I thought I should have gone dis-

distracted. I could not have suffered more for my Brother. You know how anxious I was for your recovery, and yet I was not chid for my anxiety, nor supposed to behave with any impropriety, neither then, nor for the joy I expressed at your recovery. When I found you were not only to leave *Montpelier*, but *France* too, when I found that my Father and Mother were determined to remain, I pined, and, at last, not being able to live any longer without seeing you, without being as near you as I wished to be, I could not resist the inclination I felt to come to *England*. And now, Mr. *Byron*, if I have done wrong, pity me : --- I really deserve your pity, added she, looking up in my face, with her pretty eyes swimming in tears : --- you would know that I deserve your pity more than contempt,  
if

if you could be sensible of what I have endured on your account.

Here she ceased speaking, and gave a free vent to her tears.

Her tears affected me exceedingly : I was pained to an extreme, to think that any young person should so very much expose herself on my account ; conscious as I was, of having never given her the least encouragement to believe that I felt a particular inclination for her ; and well assured, that, had I never loved Mrs. *Astell*, I should never have thought of marrying a Girl, who was capable of carrying her passions to such violent lengths ; I felt for her sincerely, I soothed her as well as I could, and, after having endeavoured to convince her of the dangers to which she had exposed herself, by coming from  
*France*



*France* alone, I told her that I would wait on her to *Mrs. Oswald's*, as her character would be entirely lost if she remained with *me*.

I see, *Mr. Byron*, said the poor Girl, I see that I have quite lost the good opinion you once had of me; but you are mistaken about me; I am not the Girl you think I am: I wish not to oblige you to act in the least contrary to your inclination: I would die rather than distress you, or even offend you. But may I not be permitted to look on you as a Guardian? I may then see you frequently, I may then even live in the same house with you, and not have my Reputation questioned — And if you marry, continued she, sobbing aloud, I may, with the greatest Decency, see you often.

What strange romantic notions has she imbibed! I hardly knew what to say to her. I begged her to let me wait on her to Mrs. *Oswald's*, telling her, that we would then think of some plan for her being restored to her Parents, who could not but feel unutterable anguish on her having left them; and that I was afraid they would look on me in a very despicable light, on a supposition that I had a considerable share in her elopement.

She assured me, that, instead of thinking ill of me, knowing that I could not be capable of such a proceeding, their suspicions would fall entirely upon Mr. *Burrell*, who came over with her.

Here was a Denouement.

How

How, Miss *Farnby*, said I, have you trusted yourself with a young Man, to whom you were almost a stranger!

Dear Mr. *Byron*, replied she, do not condemn me for such a piece of indiscretion: I did not know which way to procure a passage without being discovered: and happening to meet with Mr. *Burrell*, I desired him, on his saying that he was going to *England*, to procure a passage for a Friend of mine—I did not discover myself to be the Passenger till I came on board. At first he very civilly offered to do me any service, and I thought that, as he was a Gentleman, and known to you, I might depend upon his treating me with politeness at least—But I soon found, added she, sighing, that the necessity of trusting

people shews their real characters presently, and makes them rather insolent; for before we landed, he had the assurance to make proposals, which I could not hear without indignation: And I suppose I discovered my resentment too freely; for he told me, that if I was in pursuit of a Lover, as he imagined I was, he did not see why he might not suit me, thinking that one Man was as well as another. — Shocked at so indelicate, so gross a speech, I kept at the greatest distance from him during the rest of the time we were obliged to be together, and I will never see him again.

I was more astonished, I confess, at this part of Miss *Farnby's* story, than I had been at the foregoing one, and thought I had a very fair opportunity to expatiate upon the imprudent exposure



posure of her person, and to re-intreat her to return home: I assured her, that, whether I married or not, it would be equally detrimental to her to live with me: By so doing, I endeavoured to convince her of the impossibility of my ever being connected with her, in the manner she wished, without giving her an absolute refusal, which would have pained me extremely.

I then insisted upon carrying her directly to Mrs. *Oswald*; and she no longer made any resistance, but seemed to wish that I had been willing to let her stay with me. I was exceedingly vexed, however, to be obliged to take such a journey, just at the moment when I was wild to be with Mrs. *Astell*.

We had a very dull ride. I was lost in thought, and, I dare say, poor *Juliet* looked on me as a most stupid Companion.

Mrs. *Oswald* was so much surprized at the sight of us, that she could scarce believe her eyes.

I did not chuse to explain things before Miss *Farnby*; I therefore took Mrs. *Oswald* aside, and begged her to have so much Friendship for me, as to clear me from any sinister intentions, with regard to *Juliet*, to Mrs. *Astell*. She nodded her head at me, and, looking at the poor Girl with a mixture of Pity and Concern, said, shrugging up her shoulders; This comes of educating Girls in Convents. — (Miss *Farnby* had been removed from a Convent, because an old Aunt of her

Mo-

Mother's, it seems, desired to see her, but died before her arrival.)

This affair has, I assure you, given me an infinite deal of anxiety, setting aside my being detained from Mrs. *Astell* at such a critical time.

Poor *Juliet* turned as pale as Death, and shed a flood of tears, clasping her hands together in an agony, when I left her. My compassion became almost too great for my peace. What a pity is it, that this Girl should have taken such an unfortunate fancy to me: Had I not been so long attached to Mrs. *Astell*, her violent prepossession in my favour might have, perhaps, affected me too deeply. I should have been very sorry to marry a Girl capable of acting with so much imprudence; a Girl, who has been indulgently treated by her Family, who has seen nothing

in that Family to encourage the least Indelicacy, or Indiscretion, to run away from her Parents, after a Man who had never discovered the slightest inclination for her — Such a Girl could not possibly be thought of for a Wife. I actually have some doubts concerning the constancy of such a Girl long enough even for a Mistress — I am afraid I should not be able to keep her a great while to myself. — Seriously, however, I wish *Juliet's* ridiculous conduct may not draw me into a quarrel with very worthy and agreeable People; or, at least, make them unjustly suspect me of having inveigled away their Child. — I would not, for millions, be so infamous a fellow.

I am, dear George,

Yours most sincerely,

E. BYRON.

L E T.



## LETTER LXI.

*From the Same to the Same.*

SO—it is as I feared; Mrs. *Astell* had been informed of *Juliet Farnby's* very foolish behaviour before I could reach *Astell-Park*, and received me with a coolness, with a reserve, which, had I not partly guessed the cause of it, would have made me think her extremely capricious. — However, I have been able to convince her, that I have really had no share in those precious absurdities. She pretended to believe what I said; but, at the same time, persuaded me to consider, that poor Miss *Farnby* must be for ever unhappy, by losing both her Character and her Peace.—Her Character, added she, can never be restored, if you do

not marry her; and a Person who has discovered so sincere a regard for you, who has so particularly distinguished you from all her Friends, must certainly make an excellent Wife.

How was I provoked, *George*, at this pretty, delicate speech, delivered in a fine moving voice, and mincing manner! *Mrs. Astell* never appeared so disagreeable to me before; and now I find that those very Women who appear most amiable, have their good and their bad days, I am almost determined never to marry at all. Yet, at the same moment, I cannot help loving her better than any Woman in the world, and I am thoroughly assured, that I shall never be happy without her, though we really differed to such a degree, that we almost quarrelled before we parted. I maintained,

tained, that a Girl who could leave her kind and affectionate Parents for a Man, who had not even taken the trouble to make her believe he loved her, was not capable of feeling any affection for any Man. Whoever marries such a Woman, added I, stands a fair chance to have a very fickle Wife, at least, if she does not turn out lost to all Sense of Honour.— Happiness and Honour ought to be considered, by every Woman, as synonymous terms.

Mrs. *Astell* blushed, cast down her fine eyes, hung her head, and was silent.

Having at last talked myself quite out of breath, I began to recollect what I had said, and imagined that I had made use of too severe expressions, which might not only give her of-

L. 6.

fence,

fence, but lay a restraint upon her future behaviour to me. What business had I to rail, with so much vehemence, against the indulgence of the delicious Passion, which, at that moment, swelled my bosom, ready to burst for *her*; but I was so enraged at *Juliet's* coming to destroy my hopes, when I was most flattered by them, that I hardly knew what I said.

Imagining, however, that I had given too impertinent a loose to my tongue, I began to fancy that some sort of submission was necessary; sitting down by her, and taking her Hand — (which she instantly drew away,) — I said, But we will think no more of this poor, romantic Child: Mrs. *Oswald* will take care of her: She has already too much engaged the hours which I hoped to have spent



spent in a very different manner. When may I be permitted, my dear Mrs. *Astell*, to expect the highest felicity which this world can bestow on me, by the possession of this dear delicious Hand? — Seizing it again.

Again she snatched it away. — Our sentiments, Sir, said she, are so very different, that I am persuaded we shall never be happy together: I must, therefore, insist upon declining the *Honour* you would do me.

The few last words were delivered with so particular an emphasis, that I found we were all upon the high ropes; and began, in the bitterness of my heart, to curse the whole capricious Sex; equally disgusting by their Love, or by their Hatred. — I cursed them, however, softly to myself; for to *her* I exerted all my  
clo-

eloquence, in order to prevail on her to listen to me, and to approve my passion; but all to no purpose. I knelt at her feet, I swore, I cursed aloud my cruel fortune, which had so deceived me—Still to no purpose. The fair cause of my mistress was inexorable.

After having heard me pour out my tenderest disquietudes, she rose, and coolly told me, that she, of all people, was the last to be thought of by me, as she had once been guilty of the extreme weakness of discovering sentiments in my favour, which should, on no account whatever, have transpired.—Were I ridiculous enough, continued she, to accept of your present offer, I should put it into your power to upbraid me with my past folly, whenever you was so disposed.

Look

Look upon the criminal part of my past conduct, therefore, Mr. Byron, as having been occasioned by a delirious Imagination, and that I was unable, from the terrifying ideas, which the undeserved injuries I had received, raised in my Mind, to express myself like a rational creature.

I was quite in a fury at her thus disowning all that her timidity and tenderness had forced her to utter in my favour, and was actually going to leave her in a rage: But when I beheld her sweet, modest, languid Countenance, and reflected upon the rapturous moments in which she so freely confessed every secret of her Soul, I was stopped. I stood and gazed for some time---Then, sinking at her feet, I intreated her to pardon me, if I had inadvertently, by letting  
any

any thing drop which might be misconstrued, as I was ready to declare, that her whole conduct, during the life of a Man who little merited her fidelity to him, had been, in every shape, unexceptionable---Your whole conduct, indeed, Madam, added I, has been, on every occasion, so widely different from that of a wild, childish, unthinking Girl, that I am truly sorry to see you hurt by what I have said of Miss *Farnby*.---There cannot be two persons in the World more unlike each other, in every respect, than you and that indiscreet Girl.

All I could say was insufficient to produce a reconciliation. My tender Looks had no effect upon her---She drew her Hand from me, even while I pressed it in the most respectful and  
affec-



affectionate manner; she drew it away with disdain.

Half wild with Despair I left her, and immediately set out for Mrs. *Oswald's*. She had, that very day, sent *Juliet* to a Relation of her's in *London*, and written a detail of this confounded affair to Mr. and Mrs. *Farnby*. --- This unlucky affair has, perhaps, ruined my peace for ever.

I told her all that had passed between Mrs. *Astell* and me, and intreated her to interpose in my behalf; to undertake to convince her Friend, that I am totally innocent with regard to *Juliet*, and inviolably attached to her. Before I had done speaking, Mr. and Mrs. *Randolph* arrived, in order to spend some time with Mrs. *Oswald*, who is soon to make *Framp-ton* happy.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oswald assured me, that though she was hurried to death, she would write to Mrs. Astell, and charged me, with a laugh, to keep from her, if I could, till she had received her Letter. — I swear I am hardly able to obey her commands: But all Fellows in love, you know, are either Madmen or Fools.

Adieu.

LET-

## LETTER LXII.

*Mrs. OSWALD to Mrs. ASTELL.*

INDEED, my dear *Maria*, you have given me a vast deal of trouble, just at a time when I have not a single moment to spare. Your behaviour to *Byron* has almost deprived him of his reason; it sent him to me in such a hurry of spirits, that I knew not what to do with him.

Inclosed you will find the exact history of Miss *Farnley*, in which she acquits *Byron* of having ever given her any encouragement to believe, that he took any particular notice of her: It was written by herself, while she was with me, to her Father and Mother, in hopes of making her peace; and it is transcribed for your perusal by our  
amiable

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amiable *Marianne*, who, with the good-humoured *Randolph*, is come hither to deliver me up to *Frampton*, as she calls it. I do not invite *you*, because I hope you will have employment enough, of the same nature, on your hands. If ever you wish to be happy, receive *Byron* as he ought to be received, as your Lover, as the Man who *should* be your Husband. He deserves, as well as you, all the Happiness which this World can afford.

I am, my dear Friend,

Yours, as usual,

H. Q.

L E T.



## LETTER LXIII.

*Mr. BYRON to Sir GEORGE GRAY.*

**I** Had just patience enough to stay till *Maria* had received Mrs. *Oswald's* Letter, but not till she had quite gone through the inclosed, and she had the cruelty to make me wait till she had, I actually believe, read it twice over. While she left me in the parlour, I walked up and down in it with my watch in my hand, ready to dash it against the floor several times, provoked at my Charmer's delay.

As soon as she re-entered the room, she, with a smile beyond description, said to me — I beg your pardon, Mr. *Byron*, for leaving you alone so long, but could not, before I had read Miss *Farnby's* Narrative, tell how —

Here

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Here she paused. --- Eagerly advancing to her, I seized her no longer unwilling Hand. --- I hope, said I, that I am now, thanks to Mrs. *Oswald's* Friendship, restored to your good opinion, Madam; and that you will not continue to refuse to make me completely blest.

And will you not owe as much to me, as to Mrs. *Oswald*, replied she, in the softest accents, when I tell you that all my doubts are removed, and ---

What! my lovely *Maria*, replied I, clasping her in my arms ----

I have no will, but yours, said she, --- averting her Face from me, covered with Blushes.

I was resolved, however, not to let it escape my eager Lips. She gently chid

chid me; and I as gently reprov'd her for the composure with which she wasted so many precious moments, in conning over and over the tedious copy of *Juliet's* Letter, while I sat tormented with Doubt, and tortured with Delay.

She begged my pardon again, but I was determin'd to be revenged; and, therefore, would not forgive her, till I had availed myself of my situation, to extract from her a number of the tenderest and most satisfactory Confessions; Confessions for which I might have waited, perhaps, a twelve-month. We are now, I hope, as well pleas'd with each other as we can be, till after Marriage--- With such an Angel, in Person and in Mind, I must, I think, be compleatly happy; and yet, *Gray*, most unaccountable disappointments do  
some-

Sometimes happen, even when we think we are sure of enjoying uninterrupted Felicity. However, I am sanguine enough to believe, that I shall always love her to Madness, though I should find all the failings of her Sex centered in her, and be the most faithful Husband on the face of the earth.

--- I look upon Constancy in a Husband to be a specific for the preservation of Tenderness and Honour in a Wife; and so, my dear *Gray*, I am

Your ever sincere, and now

Thrice happy Friend,

E. BYRON.

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